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Miscellaneous No. 5 (1935)

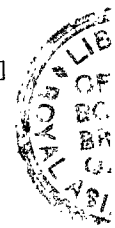
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

London, December 9, 1935

[In continuation of "Miscellaneous No. 8 (1934)" (Cmd. 4772)]



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SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Sir, *London, December* 9, 1935.

WE have the honour to report that the Sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations opened at Geneva on the 9th September last.

2. As usual, the proceedings were opened by the President of the Council at the time, M. Ruiz-Guinazu, delegate of the Argentine.

3. After the Committee on Credentials had been appointed and had made its report the Assembly proceeded to the election of its President. M. Benes, delegate of Czechoslovakia, received 49 votes out of 53 and was duly elected.

4. After a short speech by the President, the Assembly adopted its agenda postponing until its next ordinary session the questions of (1) prohibiting, under the provisions of the Covenant, the supply of arms and war material to belligerents, and (2) the amendment of the Covenant to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris. An Agenda Committee was constituted, and it was decided to set up five committees to carry out the work of the Assembly. As has been the case at each Assembly since the Disarmament Conference was inaugurated, the Third Committee (Disarmament) was not constituted.

5. The five committees met and elected their chairmen, who were as follows :—

First Committee (Constitutional and Legal Questions) : M. J. Limburg (Netherlands).

Second Committee (Technical Organisations) : M. W. Zawadzki (Poland).

Fourth Committee (Finances of the League) : M. S. Radulescu (Roumania).

Fifth Committee (Social and Humanitarian Questions) : Countess Apponyi (Hungary).

Sixth Committee (Political Questions) : Mr. de Valera (Irish Free State).

The six Vice-Presidents of the Assembly were then elected. They consisted of the first delegates of France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Mexico. The Assembly subsequently approved a proposal that, in view of the custom whereby the representatives of States permanently represented on the Council are invited to act as Vice-Presidents, the first delegate of the U.S.S.R. should be invited to sit in the General Committee of the Assembly.

6. The general discussion, which has formally for its subject the Secretary-General's report on the work of the League during the preceding year, was opened by Sir Samuel Hoare.

He began by reaffirming the support of the League by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the interest of the British people in collective security. He made it clear that His Majesty's Government and the British people maintained their support of the League and its ideals as the most effective way of ensuring peace, and that this belief in the necessity for the preservation of the League was their sole interest in the present controversy. No selfish or imperialist motives entered into their minds at all. The League was not a super-State or even a separate entity existing in itself, it was what its member States made it, and was dependent upon the support which the Governments of member States received from their peoples. If national support was strong the League would be strong; if it was weak and uncertain, the policy of the League could not be firm and consistent. Collective security, by which was meant the organisation of peace and the prevention of war by collective means, was, in its perfect form, not a simple but a complex conception. The system of collective security was designed to operate in two principal conditions; first, that the members of the League should have reduced their armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations, and, secondly, that the possibility was open, through the machinery of the League, for the modification by consent and by peaceful means of international conditions whose continuance might be a danger to peace. There was also the obligation to take collective action to bring war to an end in the event of any resort to war in disregard of the Covenant. Underlying these obligations there was the expectation that the system would be universally subscribed to. These conditions had not been fully met. From fear of war, examples in limitation of armaments by certain countries, and particularly by the United Kingdom, had not been followed, and now the armaments of most countries, and, last of all, of the United Kingdom, were increasing: there had been a natural reluctance voluntarily to contemplate the possibility of changes in the existing position, and, lastly, the League had from the outset lacked the membership of certain powerful nations, and had lost the membership of others. The obligations of the Covenant remained and their burden had been increased. If the burden was to be borne it must be borne collectively; if risks for peace were to be run, they must be run by all. The security of the many could not be ensured solely by the efforts of the few, however powerful they might be. His Majesty's Government would be second to none in their intention to fulfil, within the measure of their capacity, the obligations which the Covenant laid upon them.

7. It was also necessary to do something to remove the causes from which war was apt to arise. Some other means than the

recourse to arms must be found for adjusting the natural play of international forces. The problem of the world's economic resources and the possibility of making better use of them in future was an example of questions which needed investigation. His Majesty's Government considered that this problem was economic rather than political and territorial; it was the fear of monopoly which was causing alarm, it was the desire for a guarantee that the distribution of raw materials would not be unfairly impeded. So far as His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were concerned, they would be ready to take their share in an investigation of these matters.

8. In conclusion, Sir Samuel Hoare, in recapitulating the United Kingdom attitude to the Covenant, reaffirmed that it was to the principles of the League, not to any particular manifestation, that the nation had demonstrated its adherence. In conformity with its principles and expressed obligations the League stood, and the United Kingdom stood with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression. This was the United Kingdom attitude towards the Covenant; it would not be changed so long as the League remained an effective body, and the main bridge between the United Kingdom and the Continent remained intact.

9. The general discussion occupied the Assembly for five days, in the course of which speeches were made by the delegates of thirty-two countries. The great majority of the speakers referred to the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia, and expressed their fidelity to their obligations under the Covenant and their intention to assume their full responsibilities should the procedure of conciliation unhappily fail to bring about a settlement. The Abyssinian delegate explained the attitude of his Government in the dispute, and commended his country's cause to the sovereign protection of the League of Nations. Among other questions raised, the delegate of Australia spoke of the importance of the nutrition from the point of view of public health, the Norwegian delegate discussed international assistance to refugees, and the Hungarian delegate spoke of equality of rights and of minorities.

10. The election to the three non-permanent seats on the Council vacated by the retirement of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Mexico was held on the 17th September.

11. A request for re-eligibility received from Poland was acceded to: and the following three States were then elected to the vacant seats:—

Roumania, 50 votes.
Ecuador, 45 votes.
Poland, 42 votes

12. The League committees dealt with the following questions :—

FIRST COMMITTEE.

(Legal and Constitutional Questions.)

I.—*Assembly Procedure.*

13. The Assembly referred to the First Committee a note by the Secretary-General suggesting certain amendments in article 7 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure. The chief object of these amendments was to make the First Delegates of the permanent members of the Council *ex officio* members of the General Committee and to give an official existence to the Agenda Committee.

14. During the discussions on this subject the Norwegian delegate made a proposal for a committee for nomination of candidates, whose function would be to facilitate arrangements for elections at the beginning of each session of the Assembly. The committee found that this proposal raised questions of principle, and it was decided by twenty votes to ten and two abstentions to advise the Assembly to adjourn the whole question to its next session.

II.—*Permanent Court of International Justice.*

(a) *Vote on request for Advisory Opinion.*

15. The committee discussed at considerable length a resolution proposed by the Belgian, Netherlands, Norwegian, Swedish and Swiss delegates regarding the requirements for voting, in the Council or Assembly, a resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the Permanent Court of International Justice.

16. The Belgian delegate, in opening the discussion, explained that in 1928 the Assembly had expressed the desire that, when circumstances permitted, the Council should have a study made of the question whether the Council or the Assembly might, by a simple majority, ask for an advisory opinion of the Court within the meaning of article 14 of the Covenant of the League, or whether an unanimous vote was necessary. No effect had been given to that recommendation, and the supporters of the present resolution therefore desired that it should be repeated. There was much disadvantage in the uncertainty which at present existed in this matter. In practice, the Council had only applied to the Court when its members were unanimous in wishing to do so, and its applications had become steadily less frequent since 1928. Amongst the disadvantages of this state of affairs were mentioned the facts (1) that a party to a dispute may be deprived, by the sole veto of the opposite party, of the advantages of a decision on a point of law by the highest international tribunal; and (2) that the infrequency of applications for consultative opinions of the Court hinders the development of international law.

17. The Belgian delegate dealt at length with the various objections which had been raised in 1928 to the principle of the majority vote in this matter. The Yugoslav delegate, who was supported by the Roumanian and Czechoslovak delegates, then reaffirmed these objections, which were based principally on the following argument. The advisory opinions of the Court amounted in fact to regular judgments, and had such authority that the Council was almost bound to uphold them. In fact the Council had never given a judgment which contradicted an advisory opinion of the Court. Those countries, therefore, which had not accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court in all matters could not admit the authority of a simple majority of the Council to impose on parties to a dispute what amounted, in fact, to a judgment by the Court.

18. The United Kingdom delegate (Sir William Malkin) pointed out that the draft resolution before the First Committee confined itself to a proposal that the question should be studied. He would not, therefore, follow other speakers into a discussion of the question itself, into which in his opinion it was not necessary that the committee should go. He would, however, like the resolution to be more explicit on the following points :—

(1) The view had been put forward in certain quarters that the answer to the question whether the Council might apply for an advisory opinion by a majority or by an unanimous vote would not necessarily be the same in all cases. It might vary according to the nature of the case, according to the effect which the delivery of an advisory opinion on a point of law might have on the Council's judgment of the case as a whole, and according to other factors. This view should not be excluded from consideration.

(2) In any case it was not intended to suggest either that the Council was obliged in every case to submit any points of law which arose to a competent legal authority, or that if it did desire to do so it should necessarily be obliged to obtain the opinion from the Permanent Court and not from a Committee of Jurists.

19. Other speakers, however, including the Chinese, Finnish, French, Greek, Netherlands, Polish, Swedish and Swiss delegates, spoke at considerable length on the substance of the question, and it emerged from this discussion that particular objection was seen by many delegates to the last part of the original draft resolution, which suggested that if, after studying the question, the Council should be unable to arrive at a decision, the question itself might be submitted to the Court for an opinion. This passage was accordingly omitted from the final text.

20. At the end of the general discussion the committee voted, with one dissentient, in favour of recommending a study of this

question, and a sub-committee was formed to draw up the final text of a resolution to the Assembly. The resolution proposed by the sub-committee was subsequently adopted by the First Committee and by the Assembly itself. This resolution was to the effect that the Assembly considered that it was desirable that in cases where it appeared indispensable for the accomplishment of the task of the Council or the Assembly that advice should be obtained on some point of law, such advice should, as a general rule, be requested from the Permanent Court of International Justice; and expressed the desire that the Council would examine the question in what circumstances and subject to what conditions an advisory opinion might be requested under article 14 of the Covenant.

(b) *Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.*

21. The question was also discussed of the entry into force of the amendments to the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice contained in the Protocol dated the 14th September, 1929.

22. It was explained to the committee by the *rapporteur* (the Swiss delegate) that in spite of a resolution adopted by the Assembly in 1932 stressing the importance attached to the prompt entry into force of these amendments, the necessary ratifications of the Protocol had not yet been received, and the Court has continued to work under a provisional system set up by the Assembly's resolutions of the 25th September, 1930. The outstanding ratifications were those of Brazil, Panamá and Peru, and it was understood that all three Governments were prepared in principle to ratify as soon as possible

23. The committee therefore felt that it was necessary to take steps to put the amendments into force at a specified date, either by assuming the approval of the three States which have not ratified, or by notifying them that unless they raise objections within a certain period the amendments will be put into force automatically. The committee obtained the advice of the Registrar of the Court as to the date on which the amendments could conveniently come into operation. He suggested the 1st February, 1936.

24. In supporting the resolution proposed by the Swiss delegate the French delegate expressed the view that the practice of States in signing international agreements and then failing to ratify them constituted one of the serious weaknesses of the League system.

25. The resolution finally adopted by the committee, and subsequently approved by the Assembly, requests the Council to take the necessary steps to put the Protocol into force on the 1st February 1936, if the last ratifications have not been effected before that date.

on condition that the States concerned, to whom this resolution will be communicated, have not in the meanwhile made objection to the contemplated procedure.

III.—*International Institute for the Unification of Private Law.*

26. The committee considered this year the work of the International Institute at Rome for the Unification of Private Law.

27. In submitting to the committee a draft report and resolution the *rapporteur* (the French delegate) paid a tribute to the work of the Institute and to the Italian Government for their maintenance of the Institute. The Italian delegate said that the Institute was now in full activity. It had elaborated draft uniform laws for the sale of movable property and the responsibilities of hotel keepers, both of which were now being submitted to Governments for study. It was hoped that Governments would give prompt consideration to these drafts. Draft laws on commercial arbitration were also in course of preparation, and work had been started on two further questions, namely, the conclusion of contracts between absent persons and the civil responsibility of motorists. The Institute consulted distinguished jurists in different countries on all these matters and maintained close co-operation with the organs of the League of Nations and the Agricultural Institute in Rome.

28. The committee took note of this work in a resolution to the Assembly which drew the attention of Governments to the desirability of giving early and favourable consideration to the two draft laws. The resolution, which, on the suggestion of the United Kingdom representative, had been slightly amended so as to avoid any suggestion of prejudging the observations which the Governments would make on the two draft laws, was subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

IV.—*Pan-American Union.*

29. The committee considered a proposal submitted to the Fifteenth Session of the Assembly (1934) by the Colombian delegation, suggesting that a study should be undertaken of the most suitable methods of co-operation between the League of Nations and the Pan-American Union.

30. The Mexican and Argentine delegates explained that the Pan-American Union had a non-political character, and that at the last Conference of the Union, held at Montevideo in 1933, it had been decided that the possibilities of co-operation with non-American States and bodies, amongst which the League of Nations could certainly be held to fall, should be studied at the next conference which is to be held at Lima.

31. The committee accordingly decided that the results of the deliberations of the Lima Conference should be awaited before a more detailed examination of the Colombian proposal is undertaken. In the meantime, such relations as may prove desirable for mutual information should be maintained between the Secretary-General of the League of Nations and the Director-General of the Pan-American Union.

32. A resolution to this effect was adopted by the Assembly.

V.—*Status of Women.*

33. This subject was placed on the agenda of the Assembly as a result of a communication addressed by a number of delegations to the President of the Fifteenth Assembly on the 26th September, 1934.

34. From the outset of the discussions, it was found necessary to divide the subject into two parts, namely—

(1) The political and civil status of women; and
(2) The position of women in industry.

35. It was recognised that the latter aspect of the problem fell within the competence of the International Labour Organisation, and could not properly be dealt with by the Assembly.

After consulting a representative of the former body, the committee adopted, as the last paragraph of its resolution, the passage: "Expresses the hope that the International Labour Organisation will, in accordance with its normal procedure, undertake an examination of those aspects of the problem within its competence—namely, the question of equality under labour legislation—and that it will, in the first place, examine the question of legislation which effects discriminations, some of which may be detrimental to women's right to work."

36. As regards the political and civil status of women, it became clear that there were strong divergences of opinion in the committee between those who believed in the general application of the principle of equality, and those who insisted that each particular subject matter must be treated by each Government according to the traditions and social conditions in their country. The former thesis was supported notably by the Danish, Norwegian, Russian, Irish Free State and certain South American representatives, who were anxious that Governments should be in some manner encouraged to accept the principle embodied in the first article of the "Equal Rights Treaty," signed at Montevideo on the 26th September, 1933, by Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador and Cuba. This article is as follows:—

> "The contracting States agree that upon the ratification of this treaty men and women shall have equal rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions."

37. A draft resolution was proposed by the Irish Free State delegate, recommending that Governments should be asked for their

observations on the question of the status of women, with particular reference to the Equal Rights Treaty, and inviting the women's organisations, whose views were already before the committee in some detail, to make a further study of this matter. The supporters of this resolution drew attention to the danger of "discrimination disguised under the veil of protective legislation," but only the Danish delegate, speaking *à titre personnel,* demanded the total abolition of protective legislation for women.

38. The United Kingdom delegate (Sir W. Malkin) said that the principle of sex equality as regards civil and political rights had been adopted to a very large extent in the United Kingdom, and he gave a brief account of the existing position. He did not consider, however, that international action by means of a convention on the lines of the Montevideo Treaty was practicable. Few States would be prepared to treat so complex a subject as equal rights by the operation of so simple a provision. It was one thing for a country to attach importance to a principle and to give effect to it generally as circumstances might permit, but quite another thing to enter into an international obligation and give effect to it on every occasion and in all circumstances. The United Kingdom delegation could not give its approval to a resolution inviting members of the League to approve a convention on the lines of the Montevideo Treaty, but saw no objection to the procedure suggested in the Irish Free State draft resolution to the effect that Governments should be asked for their observations in regard to the status of women; and they would also accept the suggestion that the women's organisations should be asked to continue their study of the question. Subsequent discussion showed that the views expressed by Sir William Malkin were shared by a number of delegations.

39. In the meantime, however, the Belgian delegate had expressed the view that it was useless to consult States regarding the principle laid down in the Montevideo Treaty, to which, in his view, not one Government in ten could accede. He thought that the question could only be settled by national legislation, and that the League should dispense with the luxury of an enquiry. M. Rolin accordingly proposed an alternative resolution, suggesting that "the question of equality of civil and political rights can advantageously be examined by the League of Nations when the latter has before it the question of the rights of man and of the citizen." This proposal, for which there was some sympathy in the committee, was, however, defeated, and the committee finally accepted a revised version of the Irish Free State draft.

40. In the course of the discussions it became evident that many delegations considered—

(1) That the League ought not to undertake any work on the subject of the status of women without a direct mandate from States;

(2) That the question was essentially one of domestic jurisdictic and that it was not possible for States to enter into ar international obligation to apply the principle of equali generally.

41. An attempt was made without success to amend the resol tion in order to put clearly to Governments the issue whether th League could undertake to deal with this subject or not. Befo voting for the resolution, therefore, the United Kingdom delega asked that it should be put on record that in his view it would hav been preferable to define more clearly the nature of the points upo which Governments were asked to give their observations, and th nature of the information to be supplied.

42. The resolution was subsequently approved by the Assembl without discussion.

VI.—*Nationality of Women.*

43. This matter came before the present Assembly as a result o a request addressed by a number of States to the President of the 1934 Assembly. The principal issue was whether it was now possible to give formal recognition to the principle of equality or whether it should be clearly admitted that, owing to lack of unanimity, nc further progress could be made on international lines beyond th terms of The Hague Convention. Those who favoured recognition o the principle, of which the Russian, Scandinavian, Irish Free Stat and certain South American delegations were the chief protagonists suggested that it should take the form of a recommendation t Governments to accede to the Convention on the Nationality o Women concluded in 1933 at Montevideo, article 1 of which reads a follows: "There shall be no distinction based on sex as regard nationality in their legislation or in their practice." This conventio is open to accession by any State.

44. Other delegations, however, including the Swiss, Austrian Polish, Netherlands, Portuguese and Italian, were opposed to an expression of approval of a convention which embodied a principl which they could not recognise. A draft resolution prepared by th Chilean delegate "expressing high appreciation of the achievements' of the States parties to the Montevideo Convention was therefor redrafted so as to state merely that the Assembly "noted wit interest" these achievements. The United Kingdom delegate wa supported by the Australian, Canadian and New Zealand repre sentatives in stating that, since there was at present no sufficier degree of unanimity between the various nations on this subject, was impossible to ask the Assembly to recommend the principle c equality laid down in the Montevideo Convention, and that, so far a action by the League was concerned, it would be preferable to leav it to the Council to determine when further concerted internationa action would be justified. This view was embodied in the resolutio ultimately adopted by the committee.

45. Sir William Malkin pointed out at the same time that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had ratified The Hague Convention and had passed legislation to give it effect, and that, although it was recognised that the advocates of full equality were not satisfied with that convention, His Majesty's Government took the view that it had been of considerable value in removing certain disabilities from women in regard to nationality. Although the Assembly would probably not be prepared to recommend the principle laid down in the Montevideo Treaty, Sir William Malkin thought there need be no difficulty about calling the attention of States to the opportunity of accession offered by that convention to Governments which approved its principle.

46. The resolution was subsequently adopted by the Assembly without discussion.

Second Committee.

(*Technical Organisations.*)

I.—*Health Organisation.*

47. The committee had before it a comprehensive report upon the activities of the organisation, which drew attention to the three salient features of this work, namely, continuity, practical utility and universality.

48. The United Kingdom delegate (Lord De La Warr) paid, in common with many other speakers, a warm tribute to the Health Organisation and to its director, Dr. Rajchman. He thanked the organisation for arranging in the latter part of 1934 a useful mission of British experts to study hospital practice and construction in various European countries. He stressed the importance of two forthcoming conferences, the Intergovernmental Conference on Biological Standardisation to be held in Geneva in October 1935 and the Pan-African Health Conference, which had been convened in South Africa at the invitation of the Union Government.

49. Other delegates referred to different aspects of the Health Organisation work which were of especial interest to their Governments. The Italian and Hungarian delegates gave an account of the attention which had been paid in their countries to the problem of rural housing. The Chinese and Indian delegates drew attention to the importance of the Rural Hygiene Conference in the Far East to be held in 1936. The Australian delegate emphasised in particular the work of the Health Organisation in connexion with nutrition.

50. The resolution of the committee, which was subsequently approved by the Assembly, noted with satisfaction that the national Administrations of countries in all continents were making ever-

increasing use of the Health Organisation, which was accordingly receiving a growing measure of support in the discharge of its duties. The committee approved the work of the Health Organisation, and referred various suggestions and efforts of collaboration mentioned in its report to the notice of the Health Committee.

II.—*Economic and Financial Organisations.*

51. The committee had before it the reports of the Financial and Economic Committees on Agricultural Protectionism, Clearings and International Economic Relations.

52. As was the case last year, however, the discussion tended to centre round the speech of the French delegate, M. Bonnet, the Minister of Commerce. In this speech M. Bonnet said that the League's first duty was to demonstrate the fatal consequences of the economic policy that had been followed in the past ten years. He referred to the investigations of the technical committee, which he would like to see extended in certain directions. He admitted that there were signs of recovery, but held that they were local and limited in extent. He argued that an effort would have to be made to extend it, and he returned more than once to the point that recovery was closely bound up with the problem of currency instability. There could be no solution of the crisis so long as currency instability and exchange control continued and so many barriers obstructed the movements of capital and goods. He then came to the most important passage in his speech, in which he declared that his Government would in future accept a more liberal commercial policy on certain conditions. The conditions he enumerated were that France should be certain of finding herself faced with nations which on the one hand were imbued with the same goodwill in economic matters, and on the other were ready to undertake to maintain currency stability at a fixed parity during the whole period of any commercial agreements to be concluded.

53. Several days elapsed between the delivery of M. Bonnet's speech and the reply of the United Kingdom delegate (Dr. Burgin). The greater part of Dr. Burgin's speech was devoted to reviewing conditions. He emphasised particularly the moderate policy which the United Kingdom had pursued during the economic crisis, and drew attention to the evident signs of improved conditions. He held out a hope that just as the crisis itself had been universal and inescapable, so recovery would also be universal and inescapable. In regard to M. Bonnet's speech, he emphasised particularly the importance of trade agreements and of adherence to the most-favoured-nation principle which enabled these agreements to have the maximum effect on world trade. He also said that M. Bonnet's statement had been referred to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, who would give it the most careful consideration.

54. The operative part of the resolution on this subject as finally accepted by the committee was as follows :—

> "Recommends that Governments should endeavour to encourage freer trade by the conclusion of bilateral agreements, subject, should they consider it necessary, to the provision that, in the event of a large variation in the rate of exchange between the currencies of the contracting parties, there should be power to take steps to revise the agreement at short notice."

A reference to most-favoured-nation treatment was included in the preamble.

55. All speakers in the debate on this subject showed the greatest interest in the questions with which, on the economic and financial side, the Second Committee dealt. They all agreed as to the present difficult situation and the necessity for doing something, and urged that there must be international co-operation. But opinion was not unanimous in regard to the evils of the various devices which the depression has brought into existence. While the Czechoslovak delegate dilated on the ill-effects of clearings on Czechoslovak trade, M. Stucki, the delegate of Switzerland, found some merit in them, at any rate in so far as his own country was concerned. M. Bonnet's speech was generally praised, more especially by the Australian delegate (Mr. Bruce) who made a constructive and helpful speech.

56. It should be added that apart from the resolution tabled by the United Kingdom, the report of the committee to the Assembly contained three other resolutions. One of these, which was supported by a number of delegations, proposed that the Council should consider the desirability of an enquiry to ascertain how the conclusions of the Joint Committee on Clearing Agreements could be applied. The United Kingdom delegation doubted the necessity of the resolution, but did not formally object. A second resolution, which had been put forward in the debate by the Netherlands representative, was to the effect that a committee of legal and financial experts should examine means for improving contracts relating to international loans issued by Governments or other public authorities, with a view to the preparation of model provisions. The United Kingdom delegate expressed the doubt whether it was in fact practicable to draw up such a model, but did not press the matter to a vote. It should be noted that this proposal had considerable support, including that of the Australian delegation. The third resolution recommended the resumption of consultations of agricultural experts.

57. The report and resolutions were adopted by the Assembly on the 28th September.

III.—*Communications and Transit Organisation.*

58. The report and resolutions of the committee, which were subsequently adopted by the Assembly, dealt with the recently completed enquiry into national public works, and invited the Organisation to undertake a systematic and expert examination of the material which had been collected. The Organisation was also asked to study the problem of transport co-ordination in its technical, economic and financial aspects.

59. The report also covered the work done by the Organisation during the year on the question of the pollution of the sea by oil. The United Kingdom delegate (Lord De La Warr) referred to the initiative of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in bringing this question before the League of Nations. A questionnaire had been sent to Governments and the replies showed clearly that international action was needed to remedy a serious evil. It was evident from the replies that there was a difference of opinion as to the best remedy, and there appeared to be some disadvantages to all the proposals so far put forward for consideration, namely, the establishment of zones within which oil and oil mixtures should not be discharged, the provision of separating facilities in ports, and the provision of separators in ships themselves. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom considered, however, that international measures should be devised to deal with the problem, and they were prepared to fall in with any international scheme calculated to lessen the damage done by oil pollution.

60. The committee finally adopted a resolution which was subsequently approved by the Assembly, deciding that the subject of oil pollution was one suitable for solution by an international convention; requesting the Council to instruct the Communications and Transit Organisation to take, as rapidly as possible, and with the assistance of expert advice if required, the necessary steps to complete the preparation of a draft convention and to submit that draft to Governments for consideration; and inviting the Council, in the light of the observations received from Governments, to convene an international conference on oil pollution at an appropriate time.

IV.—*Nutrition and Public Health.*

61. The subject of nutrition in relation to public health, and of the effects of improved nutrition on the consumption of agricultural products, was considered by the Assembly, at the request of twelve delegations, including the United Kingdom.

62. The Australian delegate (Mr. Bruce) spoke in the General Assembly of the benefits that would come from a marriage of health and agriculture. Opening the debate in the Second Committee, to which the subject was referred, he put forward as a basis of discussion

a resolution suggesting a comprehensive enquiry. There were four main aspects of the problem. Did the evidence show that increased consumption of certain food-stuffs would improve national health? It was already reasonably conclusive, but authoritative confirmation by experts working under the auspices of the League Health Organisation was desirable. Assuming such confirmation, were there any practical means of increasing consumption? It would be of great assistance in determining this if the League technical organisations could provide a clearing house of information on the action taken by Governments in this direction. Would such an increase in consumption contribute to an improvement in the world's agricultural position? It would stimulate production of the protective and more perishable food-stuffs in the industrial importing countries, thus leaving to the agricultural exporting countries a wider field for the export of their more easily transportable produce. What would be the effect of such improvement on the general economic situation? Increased purchasing power of the agricultural countries would help to break the vicious circle that was strangling international trade. Mr. Bruce then circulated a draft resolution.

63. The United Kingdom delegate (Lord De La Warr) agreed that measures designed to stimulate consumption might form a concrete start to the recovery of international trade. He fully supported the suggestion for an international enquiry to provide the material out of which Governments could fashion practical schemes that would use the world's increased powers of production for improving the national health. Planning of the market remained essential, but it could and should aim at encouraging expansion of consumption rather than restriction of production and trade. More information, particularly on the demand for food, on diet, on the possible absorption of surplus supplies and on the steps already taken in various countries was required. He alluded to the scheme in force in the United Kingdom for the provision of milk in schools as a good example of the principle of increasing consumption instead of subsidising production, and he recommended the application of this principle as a profitable alternative to large-scale subsidies or export bounties to producers.

64. Twenty delegations took part in the debate. There was general agreement on the main lines of the Australian resolution. The most important points that emerged were that increased powers of production gave to Governments the opportunity of taking another step forward in their attempt to build a healthier people, that they could do this by extending their present activities in the comparatively new field of nutrition, and that this offered a direct and practical way of dealing with the problem of agricultural surpluses and the resulting depression of prices. It was generally agreed that some of the measures taken in defence of agriculture had had a detrimental effect on national health. A reduction in costs of distribution was also urged. Education, particularly in schools, was of great importance, as malnutrition was too often due to ignorance rather than poverty.

Information was provided on the steps already being taken in a number of countries to bring excess food-stuffs within the reach of those who could not at present afford them.

65. The *rapporteur* on this subject was the United Kingdom delegate, and a drafting sub-committee was appointed to assist him in deciding the precise wording of the resolution. After dealing with the general points already mentioned above, the report outlined the nature of the proposed enquiry. It was suggested, first, that the work of the League Health Organisation on nutrition should be continued and extended; secondly, that the technical organisations of the League, in collaboration with the International Labour Office and the International Institute of Agriculture, should collect all available information on measures taken for securing improved nutrition; and, thirdly, that a committee including agricultural, economic and health experts, should be set up to make a general report to the next Assembly on the whole question, both in its health and economic aspects. These suggestions were embodied in the resolution which was adopted unanimously by the committee.

66. The report and resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 27th September.

V.—*Constitution, Procedure and Practice of League Committees.*

67. Among the items referred to the Second Committee of the Assembly for consideration was the report of the committee appointed in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Fifteenth Assembly on the 27th September, 1934, to study the constitution, procedure and practice of committees of the League of Nations.

68. In the discussion of this item a leading part was taken by the United Kingdom delegate (Lord De La Warr). As regards the general suggestion contained in the report that a new body should be created having powers of initiative and co-ordination in economic, financial and communications questions, Lord De La Warr took the line that such powers were already vested in the Council and in the Second Committee of the Assembly and that there was no necessity to create a new body. As regards the Financial Committee, he drew attention to the suggestion made in the report that the members of this committee should be appointed for a period of three years and should retire simultaneously. He pointed out that this suggestion would conflict with a decision of the Council taken in 1934 under which the existing situation in regard to this committee would be reconsidered in 1937. He deprecated any immediate action in the sense of a modification of the present system which had given such excellent results. In view of the special nature of the Financial Committee's work it was perhaps advisable not to put any strict limitation on the terms of appointment of its members. As regards

the proposals dealing with the Health Organisation, he drew attention to the arrangement made in 1923 and still in force between that body and the International Health Office in Paris, and pointed out that the reorganisation proposed would destroy that arrangement, which had given satisfactory results. He suggested that, at any rate, the views of the International Health Office should be sought on the proposals. Finally, as regards the section of the report dealing with social questions, he supported the proposals contained therein and suggested that their detailed application should be left to the Council, with the assistance and advice of the Secretary-General.

69. In the course of the debate a valuable suggestion was put forward by the French delegate in connexion with the Health Organisation. He agreed with the United Kingdom delegate that the International Health Office in Paris should be consulted in regard to the proposals contained in the report. He suggested, however, that, while efforts should continue to be made in the future to ameliorate the position of the Health Organisation, an immediate improvement might be effected by changing the membership and powers of the Bureau of the Health Committee as follows :—

(1) The Bureau should be enlarged so as to consist of the President of the Health Committee, the President of the International Health Office and eight other members, of whom four would be nationals of Powers permanently represented on the Council.

(2) The Bureau should function in the intervals between the annual sessions of the Health Committee, and would be invested with the duties and powers of that committee.

This proposal was supported by the United Kingdom delegate and accepted by the Committee.

70. The report of the Committee proposed that the Assembly should approve the general suggestions relating to committees, subject to necessary adjustments in particular cases. The Second Committee considered that these suggestions might be adopted by the Council as a statement of principles applicable to all League committees. As regards the Financial Committee, the report suggested that the question of the application to it of the statutory rules should be discussed when the Council came in 1937 to reconsider the committee's terms of reference. As regards the Health Organisation the proposal of the French delegation was recommended to the Assembly. Finally, the Second Committee advised the postponement of a decision on the question of the creation of a special body having powers of initiative and co-ordination in matters connected with economics, finance and communications.

71. The report and its conclusions were subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

Fourth Committee.

(*Budget of the League.*)

72. The proceedings in the Fourth Committee this year differed somewhat from proceedings in earlier years in that the discussions tended to centre, to a considerable extent, on two matters raised publicly after the committee had met. These two matters were a vigorous request by the French delegation for a reduction in the League budget such that the contribution of member States would be reduced by 10 per cent., and the question whether the League should make a financial contribution to the settlement of the Christian Assyrians of Iraq in French Syria. Consideration was also given by special committees to the perennial questions of contributions in arrear and allocation of expenses. In the former case considerable progress was made.

I.—*General Financial Position.*

73. The Secretary-General, who opened the general discussion on the budget in the Fourth Committee, said that the financial period 1934 had ended with a surplus of 3,878,641 fr., and that he did not think he would be unduly optimistic in saying that the present year would not end with a deficit. He pointed out that the budget for 1936 represented a reduction of 4,597,138 fr., or 13·6 per cent., on the budget of 1932. He also remarked that, despite the withdrawal of certain important States, the contribution of member States would be slightly less in 1936 than in 1935. In regard to the budget of the Secretariat itself, he warned the committee that the expenses of the Secretariat would be higher in the new building.

74. After a brief statement by the chairman of the Supervisory Commission, the delegate of France then read to the committee a letter addressed in August by M. Laval to the Secretary-General of the League, in which attention was drawn to the vigorous efforts of the French Government to secure effective economies and budgetary balance in France by the institution of a 10 per cent. cut, and in which it was argued that "this in some ways unavoidable necessity should, in the opinion of the French Government, affect the administration and budgets of the international organisations as well as of the States themselves." The letter then asked for such a reduction of expenditure in the 1936 budget as would permit of a cut of 10 per cent. in the contributions of State members. This thesis was elaborated at a later stage by M. Laval himself in two speeches, and the committee discussed at some length the possibility of economies. The United Kingdom delegate (Dr. Burgin), who intervened in the earlier part of the debate, paid a tribute to the work of the Supervisory Commission, but renewed the warning given in previous years against over-budgeting. He gave his general support to the desire for economy expressed by the French delegation, and, while

not questioning the contention that salaries fixed by contract could not be altered at the instance of one party without the voluntary acceptance of the other, drew particular attention to the necessity for enforcing the 10 per cent. cut in salaries which an earlier Assembly had approved wherever the terms of the contract made it possible. The delegate of Norway then tabled a resolution which would have had the effect of deferring until the preparation of the budget for 1937 the consideration of the question whether steps could be taken to implement the French suggestion. This resolution did not find favour with the committee, who, after hearing M. Laval, decided on the proposal of the Portuguese delegate, who was seconded by the delegate of the United Kingdom, to refer back to the Supervisory Commission the question of a cut in the current budget.

75. The supplementary report of the Supervisory Commission recommended certain reductions in the budget which totalled 1,950,000 fr. The economies were effected, so far as the International Labour Office were concerned, by deferring part of the building programme until 1937 and by a reduction in the numbers of new staff to be employed consequent upon the fact that certain of the non-member States had become members of the organisation. In the case of the Secretariat, a reduction was achieved by the deduction of an aggregate sum from the total set against certain items in the budget such as "unforeseen expenditure of the Council" and "Monetary and Economic Conference" and the creation of a reserve fund against contingencies. A similar device was employed in the case of the Permanent Court. Finally, an additional refund to contributors out of the 1934 surplus was recommended. This report, while it met with some criticism from the Director of the International Labour Office and from the representatives of Norway and certain of the South American States, was ultimately accepted.

II.—*Assyrian Settlement Scheme.*

76. Towards the end of the session the Fourth Committee was called upon to consider the scheme for the settlement of the Christian Assyrians of Iraq in French Syria. The financial regulations of the League required that the Fourth Committee should in the first place decide by a two-thirds majority whether it was prepared in principle to authorise a credit for this purpose in the budget for the coming year.

77. The debate on the question of procedure was opened by the United Kingdom delegate (Dr. Burgin), who reviewed once more the events leading up to the present situation, and emphasised that the scheme now under consideration represented the last chance of an honourable and permanent solution of the Assyrian problem. Dr. Burgin explained the financial position, and pointed out that, on the basis of the latest figures produced by the Council Committee (see paragraph 173 below), and assuming that the proposed credit

operation could be realised, 44 million French francs, or 8,800,000 Swiss francs, remained to be found, after taking into account the contribution of the Mandated Territories of the Levant. The United Kingdom was prepared to contribute up to a maximum of 3,750,000 Swiss francs, and it was hoped that the Iraqi Government would do the same, making 7,500,000 Swiss francs in all. Dr. Burgin tabled a resolution recommending the Assembly to undertake to provide the funds necessary to complete the scheme, over and above all independent contributions, including those from private charitable sources, and specifically to approve the insertion towards meeting that liability of a sum in the budget of the League. He pointed out that, so far as the drainage and irrigation works were concerned, the figures were final, as the authorities of the mandated territories had assumed liability for any excess, but the cost of settlement was an estimate which might be exceeded. But on the assumption that the estimates were exactly realised and the proposed credit operation successfully carried out, the gap which the resolution asked the League to fill might be 1,300,000 Swiss francs. Dr. Burgin, after showing the need for strict financial control, emphasised the amount of progress hitherto made towards a solution of the problem, and drew attention to the hopes expressed by the Council Committee, in the Council itself, and in the Sixth Committee that the Assembly would not fail to take the necessary measures to complete the task. League assistance was equitable in view of the past connexion of the League with the problem. But he asked the committee to look upon the part to be played by the League not as a liability, but as an opportunity to permit the completion of a work which, if successful, would be a brilliant addition to its solid achievements in the humanitarian sphere.

78. After a somewhat lengthy debate, in which considerable opposition was expressed to the assumption by the League of financial liability in a question which several speakers evidently still regarded as an ordinary refugee question, the committee decided by 29 votes to 0, with 7 abstentions, to refer the matter to the Supervisory Commission for study and report.

79. The meeting of the Supervisory Commission was private, but Dr. Burgin was invited to appear before the commission. He restated the case for League participation and for the assumption by the League of the residual liability. He urged that the League should at all events participate in a manner which would ensure the success of the scheme.

80. The Supervisory Commission presented its report on the 25th September. It pointed out that the estimates for settlement might be exceeded as the number of Assyrians to be transferred was uncertain, and that difficulties might arise in obtaining the proposed credit of 20 million French francs since no other security than Assyrian reimbursements was at present contemplated. It

pointed out moreover that League intervention in settlement questions had hitherto been confined to obtaining technical advice, providing experts and collaborating in the issue of loans, without any large sums being charged direct to the League budget and without the League's action in the matter exceeding the limits of organisation and co-ordination. The Council had, however, been dealing with the matter for some years past and the commission thus felt obliged to propose that the Assembly should grant financial assistance for this work so far as its budgetary resources would allow. The commission stipulated that its conclusions must not serve as a precedent and that the League could not accept a residuary liability. The League contribution should be clearly fixed forthwith and should in no case be increased later. With these provisos the commission recommended the Fourth Committee to fix at 1,300,000 Swiss francs the final figure of the League's contribution to the work of settling the Assyrians of Iraq in the Mandated Territories of the Levant. This sum would be spread over four years, namely, 400,000 Swiss francs for 1936 and 300,000 in each of the following three years.

81. This report was discussed by the Fourth Committee on the 26th September. The Iraqi delegate (Nuri Pasha), then announced that the Iraqi Government accepted the conditions attached to the offer of the United Kingdom Government in so far as those conditions applied to Iraq and that the Iraqi Government would accordingly recommend Parliament to authorise *pari passu* with the United Kingdom the increase of the contribution already promised by Iraq, up to a maximum of £250,000.

82. The United Kingdom delegate pointed out that the recommendations of the Supervisory Commission stopped short of the assumption by the League of unlimited liability. Nevertheless His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, while unable to increase their independent contribution, would maintain their offer, subject to its other conditions being fulfilled and in particular subject to the condition that a satisfactory scheme of financial control was adopted which would in practice have regard to the fact that the funds available were limited.

83. A lengthy debate followed in which opposition was expressed by the Latvian and Greek delegates and reservations made by the delegates of Spain (who, however, supported the proposed credit) and Belgium. M. Rappard, the delegate of Switzerland, in his capacity as a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission, claimed that Sir F. Humphrys had, before that commission in 1931, accepted entire responsibility on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom for the consequences of the termination of the mandatory régime in Iraq, and he indicated, without opposing the present credit, that it would have been fitting if His Majesty's Government had assumed entire financial responsibility for the present scheme. Dr. Burgin replied by quoting the words of the

chairman of the Mandates Commission itself at a meeting on the 9th November, 1931. The chairman had then, according to the minutes, explained "with a view to removing any misunderstanding on the subject, that the responsibility retained by the mandatory Power lay in the initiative it had taken in proposing the emancipation of the mandated territory. He thought it was very difficult to impose on the mandatory Power after the expiration of the mandate responsibility for the activity of a State which had become sovereign."

84. The Supervisory Commission's proposals were then put to the vote and approved by the 26 votes to 3, with 6 abstentions, the opposing votes being those of Greece, Latvia and the Netherlands.

III.—*Budget Position.*

85. The following table shows the comparative budget position for 1935 and 1936:—

	1935.	1936 (as submitted to the Fourth Committee).	1936 (as approved by the Fourth Committee and submitted to the Assembly).
Secretariat	15,041,388	14,919,755	14,591,635
International Labour Office	8,686,046	7,402,871	6,699,450
Permanent Court ...	2,535,646	2,521,200	2,321,200
Permanent Central Opium Board	114,984	118,513	119,463
Nansen Office	280,000	250,000	270,000
Buildings	2,209,000	2,334,000	2,334,000
Pensions	1,772,600	1,544,517	1,544,153
Assyrians of Iraq... ...	...	...	400,000
Total Budget ...	30,639,664	29,090,856	28,279,901

IV.—*Allocation of Expenses and Contributions in Arrear.*

86. The allocation of expenses and contributions in arrear are questions which come before the Fourth Committee annually; they are in part at least the product of world economic depression. This year it was found impossible to go very far in the direction of the solution of the former question. The United Kingdom delegate, however, in his initial speech in the Fourth Committee made it clear that His Majesty's Government regarded the proposal put forward by the United Kingdom in 1934, that the contributions of all the permanent members of the Council should be fixed at the same level as that of the United Kingdom (see p. 19 of Report on the 15th Assembly, 1934, Cmd. 4772), as the best starting-point for the solution of the long-standing difficulties in this sphere. The recommendations made by the committee on the allocation of expenses in regard to the contributions of Ecuador and China were finally adopted by the Fourth Committee and the Assembly as was also a decision that the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses

should prepare a revised scale of contributions for submission to the Assembly next year.

87. Considerable progress was made in the question of contributions in arrear. In 1934 the Assembly appointed a committee to go into this matter and to present a report to the succeeding Assembly. This committee produced two reports, the second report after their reappointment by the Fourth Committee during the current session of the Assembly. While the problem of contributions in arrear may be regarded as partly due to the effect of world depression on certain of the smaller States, it is also due to the fact that in some cases, since contributions have not been paid over a large number of years, total indebtedness is high in terms of National Budgets and of ability to transfer the sum owing abroad. In their first report the committee sought to put the problem in its proper perspective when they said that the real irrecoverable arrears represented from 3–4 per cent. of the total contributions which the League had claimed from its member States. On the other hand, in their second report, they pointed out that the proportion of the current contributions remaining unpaid had risen from 14·5 per cent. at the end of 1931 to 28·03 per cent. at the end of 1934, although the prospect for the current year was more encouraging. The committee came to arrangements with ten States for the settlement of their arrears of contributions. In general the settlement involves the writing down of the arrears in varying proportions and the spreading of the payment of the balance over a period of years. Nevertheless the regulation of these debts, many of them of long standing, is a welcome step forward and the effect is to raise to 47 the number of member States who are in good standing with the League in respect of their contributions. To achieve this the committee held conferences with the representatives of the debtor States and the proposals for settlement in each case were recorded in the two reports which received the approval of the committee and of the Assembly. It should be mentioned that the first of these two reports makes certain general recommendations which seek to enforce the payment of contributions. In their covering report to the Assembly the Fourth Committee particularly emphasised one of these recommendations, namely, that the settlements which had been made were on the understanding that failure to pay the current contribution as well as an instalment under the arrangement for settlement of arrears would *ipso facto* cancel the arrangement and revive the debt in full. The Fourth Committee recommended to the Assembly, and the Assembly adopted, the proposal that the committee should continue its task and should present a further report to the Assembly next year.

V.—*Miscellaneous.*

88. The United Kingdom delegate took the opportunity to refer to the anxiety with which he regarded the actuarial position of the

Staff Pensions Fund, as shown in the Actuary's Report thereon. In the view of the United Kingdom Delegate, serious difficulties might arise in the future from the depreciation in investments, the sale of investments at low levels and the over-optimistic assumption that suitable securities could now be bought to yield interest at the rate which was assumed as a basis of calculation when the fund was set up. It was agreed that there should be a fresh actuarial survey of the fund early in 1936, and that a report containing a complete statement of the position should be put before the Assembly at its next ordinary session.

89. M. Parra-Perez was elected member and M. de Ottlik and M. Modzelewski were elected substitute members of the Supervisory Commission. Mr. Cremins was appointed member and M. van Rappard substitute member of the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund.

Fifth Committee.

(*Social and Humanitarian Questions.*)

I.—*Traffic in Women and Children.*

90. The committee dealt separately with the general problem of the suppression of the traffic in women and the particular case of women of Russian origin in the Far East. With regard to the traffic in general, the committee were reminded that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee at its last meeting had before it two drafts of a convention concerning the suppression of exploitation of prostitution by third parties; one prepared by the legal sub-committee of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee itself and the other by the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law. This question would be considered further at the next meeting of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee in 1936.

91. The United Kingdom delegate (Miss Horsbrugh) pointed out that the chief difficulty in the way of any useful convention of this sort had always been, and still was, that there were some countries which had not abolished licensed houses. It was impossible to hope that countries which maintained the system of licensed houses would be able to take part in any convention directed against *souteneurs*, since it was impossible to arrive at any definition of *souteneur* which did not include the keeper of a licensed house. Experts from America, Europe and the East had agreed that licensed houses were the basis of commercialised vice, and a report submitted to the Paris Session of the General Assembly of the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law had stated that the formula "the suppression of the exploitation of immorality without distinction" applied to the keeper of a licensed house. It was therefore clear, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, that the first question to be dealt with

must be the abolition of licensed houses. In several respects United Kingdom legislation went beyond the proposed draft convention, and it was for this reason that the British delegate on the Advisory Committee had come reluctantly to the decision that he could not accept the text of the draft, and had declined to serve on the committee set up to discuss it. If effective progress were to be made His Majesty's Government thought it would be preferable to proceed by stages, and were convinced that the first stage should be the abolition of licensed houses. Miss Horsbrugh pointed out in this connexion that licensed houses had been closed in Malaya and in Hong Kong.

92. The Spanish delegate announced that the Spanish Government had recently brought in legislation to deal with public health as a whole, introducing for the first time the conception of criminal responsibility in the matter of prostitution and of the spread of venereal disease, and had published a special decree abolishing the regulation of prostitution. This announcement was welcomed by the committee, but it was followed by a statement by the Chilean delegate to the effect that, as in Uruguay, the experiment of abolishing licensed houses had been made and had failed, and that it had been necessary to return to the old system. He had circulated to the Secretary-General a note giving the results of the experiment in Chile and drawing attention to the special factors governing this problem in South American countries.

93. It was recognised by the committee that the abolition of licensed houses must be accompanied by extended medical services and health propaganda and wider measures of rehabilitation. If this was done it was considered that the licensed house system could not be regarded as essential for the elimination of venereal disease, and the committee hoped therefore that countries which were considering the prohibition of licensed houses would not be discouraged by the experience of the two South American countries. Miss Horsbrugh pointed out that if the abolition of licensed houses was to be successful, more attention must be paid to rehabilitation. The experience obtained at Singapore showed that the closing of licensed houses would probably have been a failure if effective schemes of rehabilitation had not been adopted. The French delegate shared this view, and the chairman stated that the committee would probably be unanimous in considering that measures of rehabilitation should be taken before licensed houses were closed.

94. The committee confirmed the decisions taken by the Traffic in Women and Children Committee with regard to the proposed conference of central authorities in Eastern countries, and took note in its report to the Assembly of certain points which would be likely to figure on the agenda of the conference. This agenda would be established in consultation with the Governments.

95. Two resolutions were submitted and approved by the Assembly, the one instructing the Secretary-General to issue an appeal to such States members of the League as had not yet ratified or acceded to the 1921 Convention on the Traffic in Women and Children and the 1923 Convention on Obscene Publications to become parties as soon as possible, and the other authorising him to make all the necessary preparatory arrangements, in consultation with the Governments concerned, for holding the Eastern Conference at the beginning of the year 1937. The final decision as to the convocation of the conference would be taken by the Council at the end of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

96. In accordance with the decision of the Assembly last year, the Traffic in Women and Children Committee was invited to consider further the position of women of Russian origin in the Far East, in the light of the information collected by the Secretary-General at the direction of the Assembly. The Traffic in Women and Children Committee made a number of recommendations on the subject which were embodied in a resolution, but did not make any suggestion for direct initiative by the League of Nations. The discussion in the Fifth Committee centred not round the resolution of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, but round a suggestion that an agent should be appointed by the League of Nations to co-ordinate the efforts being made by voluntary societies to help the Russian women. The Danish delegate, who was supported by the Swedish delegate and others, made a definite proposal that this suggestion should be adopted and recommended by the Fifth Committee.

97. The Fifth Committee set up a sub-committee to report to it upon this question consisting of the delegates of Austria, the United Kingdom, China, Denmark, France, Spain and Sweden.

98. The sub-committee unanimously proposed a resolution stating that, in view of the fact that the proposal to appoint an agent would involve new expenditure by the League, it had not been able to reach a unanimous conclusion. The resolution added that, so far as the problem of prostitution was concerned, the sub-committee thought that effect should be given to the recommendations of the Advisory Commission. So far as the problem was a refugee one, in the opinion of the sub-committee it was outside the competence of the Fifth Committee.

99. When the resolution was submitted to the full committee its negative character was strongly criticised. The Hungarian delegate suggested that an attempt should be made to persuade the Fourth Committee to allocate not more than 10,000 to 12,000 fr. for the purpose. The Belgian delegate suggested as a compromise that an effort should be made to find someone on the spot who would undertake the work without entailing expenditure by the League, and

put forward a resolution to that effect. He was supported at once by the French delegate and by the Scandinavian, Chilean and Australian delegates, and, in spite of reservations by the Chinese and United Kingdom delegates, who pointed out that it would be impossible for any useful work to be carried out by an agent without funds, and that the societies on the spot for whose benefit the agent was being appointed would not be likely to attach great value to moral support alone, the Belgian resolution was accepted by the committee. At the suggestion of the French delegate, a statement was inserted in the report that, though the committee had not made any application for a credit this year, this was without prejudice to the possibility of making such a proposal on a future occasion.

100. This compromise seemed to the United Kingdom delegation to be unsatisfactory. The appointment of a League of Nations agent without funds to supervise the problem of prostitution in so large an area as China did not appear likely to enhance the reputation of the League. But, in view of the strength of feeling in the committee the United Kingdom delegate did not oppose the resolution.

101. The report and resolutions of the committee were subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

II.—*Child Welfare.*

102. The committee had before it the report of the eleventh session of the Child Welfare Committee, and a report by its *rapporteur* (the Chilean delegate).

103. The *rapporteur's* report noted in particular that the work of the Child Welfare Committee had been expanded during the year by the establishment of an Information Centre in the Secretariat charged with the task of collecting basic documentary material under the supervision of the committee and of replying to any requests for information on the subject of child welfare. The Fifth Committee made suggestions to the Child Welfare Committee for the development of the work.

104. In this connexion the *rapporteur* pointed out the importance of the Pan-American Child Welfare Institute as a centre of information and the value of the experience of the International Labour Office in collecting and classifying documentation. The French delegate drew attention to a memorandum submitted by the French Ministry of Health to the Secretary-General on the subject, and emphasised the importance of the task which the Library could perform if Governments would contribute regularly all official printed documents at their disposal, published by central or local authorities. The Turkish and Czechoslovakian delegates shared this view.

105. Several speakers welcomed the fact that the Japanese Government continued to be represented on the Advisory Committee, and that the Canadian Government would be represented in future.

106. The Roumanian delegate, after describing the efforts made in Roumania for the protection of children, with particular reference to the problems of abandoned children and of cruelty to children, drew attention to the texts adopted by the International Conference for the Unification of Penal Law, held in Madrid in 1933, and announced that the Roumanian Ministry of Public Welfare had decided to prohibit children from going to cinemas.

107. The Belgian delegate said that Belgium had recently given effect to one of the recommendations of the International Labour Office by prolonging the compulsory school age from 14 to 16. He also drew attention to the establishment of labour camps for young people by special organisations, such as the Young Catholic Workers' Association. Apart from the political or military aspect of these camps, he thought them an interesting experiment in the training of young people. This view was subsequently supported by the Austrian delegate.

108. The Belgian delegate did not, however, agree that children should be prohibited from going to cinemas. He thought that the cinema should play an important rôle in the upbringing of children. even from a recreational point of view. He also drew attention to the conclusion of the Advisory Committee that children should never be sentenced to imprisonment.

109. The Italian delegate supported the view that the committee should devote its attention to the normal child, and described at length the measures which had been taken in Italy in accordance with that principle, including the establishment of Juvenile Courts, re-educational institutions, a juvenile detention department, and an observation centre for supervising abandoned or delinquent minors and children in moral danger. The Indian delegate also described the legislation undertaken in his country, and said that the age of marriage had been raised; and that in most of the provinces laws had been passed for the protection of children and, in the case of offenders, for their segregation from ordinary criminals. Juvenile Courts and Industrial and Reformatory Schools had also been set up. Similar statements were made by the Australian, South African, French, Hungarian, and Luxemburg delegates, and emphasis was laid on the importance of the protection of the normal child in view of the effects of the economic depression.

110. The United Kingdom delegate (Miss Horsbrugh) reminded the committee of the work done by the Child Welfare Committee on the subject of blind children, and said that, in her opinion, greater progress could be made if the work of the Child Welfare Committee were concentrated on certain particular subjects. Special importance should be attached to the study of neglected and delinquent children,

and to the abolition of the practice of sending children to prison. Attention should be drawn to the measures suggested in the report for lessening the disadvantages of special institutions for children. Institutions were not an end in themselves; their object was to prepare their inmates for an independent and unsheltered life outside. Miss Horsbrugh also referred to the remarks of the Roumanian and Belgian delegates on the subject of cinemas. In the matter of children's films, efforts had up till now been concentrated on the educational possibilities of the cinema, but it should not be forgotten that the recreational film was also of great importance. It should be possible for voluntary associations and the local authorities, with the collaboration of the trade, to produce good recreational films for children which could be produced at low prices and at suitable times. The cinema should be regarded by the committee not as a danger, but as an opportunity.

111. The Greek delegate drew attention to the forthcoming Balkan Conference on Child Welfare, to be held in Athens in October; and the Mexican delegate said that a Pan-American Child Welfare Conference would be held in Mexico City in October.

112. The committee adopted two resolutions, of which the first expressed the wish that all countries who had hitherto tolerated the imprisonment of children in any form whatsoever, should aim at abolishing this system. The second asked the Child Welfare Committee to keep itself informed of the measures taken by States to give effect to the recommendation of the recent International Labour Conference concerning unemployment amongst young persons, and to give attention to the question of ill-treated children. This resolution, in pointing out that the attention of the Child Welfare Committee should be directed mainly towards normal children, asked that a further study of this question should be made by the committee at its next session in order that the Assembly might be able to formulate a definite opinion on the entire question.

113. The report of the committee and the two resolutions were subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

III.—*Assistance to Indigent Foreigners.*

114. The committee adopted, without discussion, a report submitted by the Polish delegate, stating that the Secretary-General had received 37 communications from Governments and three replies from private organisations, submitting observations on the proposals made in 1933 by the Committee of Experts on Assistance to Indigent Foreigners and the Execution of Maintenance Obligations abroad. The report proposed that the Assembly should take note of this documentary material, and that the Committee of Experts should meet shortly so as to continue its efforts to improve the lot of indigent foreigners.

115. The report was subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

IV.—*Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.*

116. During the discussions in the Fifth Committee on this subject, no differences of opinion were revealed on any major questions and no special resolutions proposed by any country. Delegates confined themselves to drawing attention to particular passages in the report of the Advisory Committee on the work of its twentieth session, and to making statements with regard to recent developments in their own countries and the possibilities of further action.

117. In a speech which was particularly well received, the United Kingdom delegate drew attention to the following points:—

(1) The progress of the campaign for the suppression of the traffic in and production of drugs in China.
(2) The importance of co-operation in these efforts by neighbouring States.

118. In this connexion Miss Horsbrugh drew the attention of the committee to a passage in the report, stating that raw opium amounting to 119,406 kilog. was exported from Iran to China in 1933, although the latter country had officially prohibited such imports. Although, in deference to an appeal by the Iranian delegate, this point was not specifically referred to in the report of the Fifth Committee to the Assembly, considerable attention was drawn to it by Miss Horsbrugh, both in the general discussion and in the subsequent discussions on the draft report.

(3) The measures taken by the municipal council of Shanghai against the clandestine manufacture of narcotic drugs.
(4) The great importance of educational and moral training in the campaign against drug addiction.

119. In emphasising this aspect of the problem, Miss Horsbrugh was followed by the delegates of Italy, France and the Netherlands, who described the various efforts which had been made in their territories to promote education and propaganda against the abuse of narcotic drugs and to provide alternative and healthy occupations for persons likely to become drug addicts; and Miss Horsbrugh drew particular attention to the success of the authorities in Malaya in closing the public opium smoking saloons and in providing outdoor games and other entertainments, as well as extended medical services for the purpose of improving the moral and physical standards of the people.

120. The general conclusion of the discussions of the Fifth Committee was to the effect that owing to strict supervision, the escape into the illicit traffic of large quantities of drugs originating from authorised manufacture has ceased, but that the illicit traffic has unfortunately continued to obtain supplies from clandestine

manufacture. It appears that by this means, in spite of the considerable efforts which have been made by many countries and by the League of Nations, the number of drug addicts has not decreased and may even have increased. The Fifth Committee felt, therefore, that the efforts of the States concerned must be directed specifically against clandestine manufacture and must not be relaxed. This question will be discussed at the next session of the Advisory Committee.

121. The report and resolution of the committee was subsequently adopted by the Assembly without discussion.

V.—*Penal and Penitentiary Questions.*

122. The Fifth Committee invited Professor Simon van de Aa, Secretary-General of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, to take part in its deliberations on this subject.

123. In opening the discussion, the *rapporteur* (the Roumanian delegate) gave a survey of the phases through which this question had passed in discussions before the League. He explained that the most important problem to be considered by the committee was the application of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners which were recommended to Governments by the Assembly last year. Twenty Governments had communicated to the Secretary-General their observations on the application of these rules in their countries, and the most important of these had been satisfactory.

124. In view of the malpractices and abuses which, according to information supplied by the Howard League for Penal Reform, still exist in many countries, the *rapporteur* thought it necessary that the attention of States should again be drawn to the necessity for observing the rules. He also emphasised the importance of the training of prison officers; the scientific examination of prisoners; and minimum guarantees for the right of defence. With regard to the latter question, the *rapporteur* was anxious that the committee should include in its resolution to the Assembly a suggestion that the matter should be referred for study to the technical organisations collaborating with the League in matters relating to penal reform. This proposal was opposed, however, by the United Kingdom and certain other delegates, on the grounds that it would involve an enquiry by the League into a subject which was not within its competence. The present discussion, in the opinion of those delegates, should be confined to the treatment of prisoners. The *rapporteur's* suggestion was therefore not adopted.

125. The Irish Free State delegate suggested that Governments should be asked to publish the Standard Minimum Rules officially, together with a statement of their acceptance of the rules. He

accordingly put forward a resolution to that effect, which also contained a list of the practices which had come to the notice of the committee, and which he desired in particular to stress :—

(1) The deprivation of the opportunity for prisoners to worship according to their religion.
(2) The detention of women in prisons without the direct supervision of women officers.

126. The United Kingdom delegate (Miss Horsbrugh) agreed that the time had come when it should be made quite clear that practices such as those mentioned in the draft resolution were not worthy of a civilised State. In particular she mentioned—

(1) The use of violence for extracting confessions or evidence.
(2) The employment of prisoners under conditions akin to slavery.
(3) The systematic under-feeding of prisoners.

127. The Belgian delegate considered that the object of the committee's work should be to press forward the principle that "the system of imprisonment should not result in feelings of hatred or revenge towards society." The Canadian delegate explained that penitentiary rules and regulations in Canada were, in general, less restrictive than the Standard Minimum Rules. The Canadian Government had decided to send its Superintendent of Penitentiaries to Great Britain to study the Borstal system. The French delegate said that the French Government had not yet officially replied to the request for information regarding the application of the rules, and he accordingly read out a statement giving information with regard to each rule. This statement gave a very favourable account of the position in France.

128. At the close of the discussion the Fifth Committee appointed a drafting sub-committee, consisting of the Belgian, United Kingdom, Irish Free State and Italian delegates, and of Professor van der Aa, to establish a final text of a report and resolution. The texts proposed by this sub-committee were eventually approved and subsequently adopted by the Assembly. The resolution requested Governments to give the greatest possible publicity, by official publications and otherwise, to the Standard Minimum Rules; informed them that the attention of the Assembly had been drawn to the alleged existence in certain parts of the world of a number of specified practices which were not only inconsistent with the Standard Minimum Rules, but were also contrary to the principles of rational treatment of prisoners, and expressed the hope that such practices would be abandoned.

VI.—*International Relief Union.*

129. The Fifth Committee considered in the course of its agenda the report of the Union's Executive Committee on its activities from the 12th July, 1933, to the 31st December, 1934.

130. It was pointed out in this report that during the period under review no disaster of exceptional gravity occurred, and that the competent organs of the union were able to devote themselves to administrative matters. Nevertheless, the report also stated that in June 1935 the union drew the attention of its members to the earthquake in Baluchistan, and that considerable funds had been contributed as a result of this appeal.

131. A resolution was passed without opposition, on the proposal of the Venezuelan delegate, expressing the hope that further States would join the thirty which had already acceded to the union, and laying stress on the importance of the measures taken with a view to ensuring the co-ordination of the efforts of other relief organisations and encouraging, especially by the appointment of experts, preparatory studies for the purpose of facilitating future action.

132. The Indian delegate, Sir Denys Bray, made a moving speech in which he described the horrors of the Quetta earthquake, and expressed the gratitude of India for the sympathy and assistance which had been given on that occasion by many nations.

Sixth Committee.

(*Political Questions.*)

I.—*Dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay.*

133. The delegate of Portugal (M. de Vasconcellos), as chairman of the Advisory Committee set up by the Assembly to follow the dispute, gave an account of the development of the situation since the special session of the Assembly on the 15th May, 1935, and referred to the signature of the Buenos Aires Protocols of the 12th June, in virtue of which hostilities had finally ceased, and to the Peace Conference which had been held under the chairmanship of the Argentine Foreign Minister. He also stated that many Governments had accepted the opinion which he had expressed as chairman of the Advisory Committee and had suspended the prohibition of the supply of war material to one or both of the former belligerents.

134. During the discussion the representatives of the Argentine and Bolivia gave information as to the progress of the peace negotiations. It was pointed out that since the cessation of hostilities demobilisation operations had proceeded normally. On the other hand, difficulties had arisen, more particularly in regard to the exchange and repatriation of prisoners of war, and the Bolivian delegate was particularly concerned to draw the attention of the Assembly to these difficulties. The Spanish delegate proposed that the Assembly should maintain in being the Advisory Committee which had been appointed to follow the situation and his proposal was supported by the delegates of Mexico and Venezuela.

135. The committee passed a resolution, which was subsequently adopted by the Assembly, noting the statements of the chairman of the Advisory Committee and relying on this committee to continue to follow the situation. The committee expressed its great satisfaction at the signature of the protocols of the 12th June, 1935, which made possible the convocation of the Peace Conference of Buenos Aires; congratulated the Governments represented on the efforts which they had made in the interests of peace; and expressed the earnest hope that the prosecution of those efforts would result in the complete restoration of peaceful understanding between Bolivia and Paraguay.

II.—*Mandates.*

136. As in previous years, the Norwegian delegation placed the question of mandates on the agenda of the Assembly. It was discussed in the Sixth Committee.

137. The Norwegian delegate (Dr. Lange) in an introductory speech reviewed the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission in the preceding year, and expressed the opinion that the powers of the Mandates Commission should be extended and, in particular, that its task should be facilitated by an additional grant of funds. The mandates system itself should also be extended, for the principle of colonial mandates applied as yet only to a relatively small part of the colonial world. A broad and liberal application of the mandates principle might contribute to the maintenance of international peace. He stressed the importance of maintaining the principle of economic equality in mandated territories, and expressed apprehension at a tendency of certain mandatory Powers to efface the lines of demarcation between territories under mandate and their adjacent colonies. In this connexion he referred to the relations between Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda and between Togoland and Dahomey, to the administration of New Guinea, and to South-West Africa. He also referred to the situation in Palestine and Syria, and drew attention to the development of certain ports in the Pacific Islands under Japanese mandate.

138. Several speakers displayed interest in Jewish immigration into Palestine and paid a tribute to the efforts of the Jewish Agency in facilitating such immigration. The representative of Latvia proposed that the committee should recommend that the mandatory Power should favourably consider every request for immigration into Palestine addressed to it by the Jewish Agency, and a proposal on these lines was supported, among other speakers, by the representative of Switzerland.

139. The representative of the Union of South Africa repeated the assurances which had already been given to the Permanent Mandates Commission that his Government would conscientiously observe the obligations which it had undertaken towards the

mandated territory. The Italian representative, as in previous years, stressed the interest of his Government in the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and expressed sympathetic interest with the Norwegian representative's remarks concerning the possible development of the mandatory system. The United Kingdom representative (Lord Cranborne) declined to enter into the question of general principle which the Norwegian representative had raised, a principle which went far beyond the report of the Mandates Commission on existing mandated territories. In regard to Palestine, he referred to the good economic condition of the country and to the efforts which were being made by the mandatory Power to encourage closer co-operation of the people of the territory both with the Government and with one another. He made a reservation in regard to the proposal of the Latvian representative concerning immigration into Palestine. He repeated the assurances which had previously been given by the United Kingdom representatives in the Sixth Committee of the Assembly, and in the Council, with regard to the postal union of Tanganyika with the neighbouring colonies and to the conference of Governors of Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda: the sole object of the measures which had been taken was administrative economy and convenience. The Belgian delegate also made a reservation in regard to the remarks of Dr. Lange on the desirability of extending the principle of the mandatory system.

140. The committee adopted a report and resolution which were subsequently approved by the Assembly. The resolution expressed renewed appreciation of the work accomplished by the mandatory Powers and by the Permanent Mandates Commission, and trusted that their efforts would be pursued in a broad co-operative spirit.

III.—*Slavery.*

141. On the initiative of the United Kingdom delegation, the question of slavery was placed on the agenda of the Assembly of the League of Nations and was referred to the Sixth Committee.

142. In opening the discussion in the committee the United Kingdom delegate (Lord Cranborne) said that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had raised the question of slavery last year in the Sixth Committee with special reference to the first meeting of the Advisory Committee of experts on slavery. This committee had now published a report, and he thought it proper that the Assembly should take note of the work of the body which had been set up to advise it on questions relating to slavery. The report was a very useful piece of work and contained much valuable material. But it also contained many requests for information and some omissions, and it seemed a fair deduction that the committee had been hampered in its task by the lack in some cases of adequate documentary material on which to work. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, it clearly revealed the desirability of an extraordinary session of the committee in 1936.

143. The first report represented an introductory phase which was concerned to explore the ground, and it was only in the light of the further material and the information for which it had asked that the committee could give authoritative advice. It was important that the League should have this advice as soon as possible. It was eminently desirable that at its next meeting the committee should not be allowed to suffer again under the disability of lack of information. The committee as at present constituted could take cognisance only of information supplied to it by Governments. Unless Governments would respond to the request for information on particular points and would transmit sufficient material, the committee could not do the work which it was set up to do. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom felt very strongly the importance of gaining in every case full information on the subject of slavery, but they recognised that it would be premature at present to put forward any proposals for the alteration of the committee's powers. The committee had itself said that it had not yet had sufficient experience to make specific proposals. Any alteration in the mandate of the committee could only be made in the light of experience, but the committee at its next session should carefully consider how far it was able to perform effective work within the limits of its present rules. After drawing attention to the existing powers of the committee in respect of its powers with regard to the alteration of its rules of procedure, Lord Cranborne said that even with such alterations the committee might find itself too greatly restricted to perform effective work. In that case the mandate given to it by the Assembly might have to be reviewed. He hoped that his observations would be considered both by Governments, on whose co-operation the work of the committee at present depended, and by the committee itself at its next meeting.

144. The French delegate did not object to the proposal to convoke a special session of the Slavery Committee, but made a financial reservation. He would not necessarily oppose the extension of the committee's powers, but he emphasised the future drawbacks of any procedure by which the views of private organisations should be taken into account as against those of the national authorities responsible for the administration of territories. The delegate of India considered the report of the committee to be full of interest and value : it fully justified the constitution of the committee. He explained the reservation made by the Government of India when ratifying the Slavery Convention of 1926. This reservation related to two distinct areas and classes of difficulties, namely, the constitutional difficulties of the States in their relationship with the Government of India, and the practical difficulties arising from vast inaccessible areas. The committee had sought to draw an analogy between different areas in India and Burma. Such an analogy was misleading. The areas in Burma in which the Government of India had been successful in abolishing slavery were entirely different from certain other areas in India.

145. The Swedish delegate expressed pleasure that the question of slavery had been referred to the Sixth Committee. In the existing circumstances it was not his intention to invoke a detailed and concrete discussion on any particular case. As regards that part of the world to which the public interest was at present turned, a committee of the Council had just put forward certain proposals in which the question of slavery had been considered. These proposals had not been transmitted to the Assembly, and it was inappropriate for the Sixth Committee to examine them. He therefore limited himself to stressing the interest which the Swedish delegation took in the work of the League of Nations in regard to slavery. This work should be made effective, and in principle he was in favour of the strengthening of the Advisory Committee which the Assembly had set up.

146. The Belgian delegate did not draw from the committee's report the conclusion that the mandate of the committee ought to be at once revised. Its powers were already great, at least as great as those conferred up to the present time on different organs of the League. He pointed out that the rules of the committee provided that the committee could make use of the special knowledge of its members in studying the questions submitted to them. The committee could, therefore, make use of a great deal of information which was not necessarily transmitted to it by Governments. In any case he hoped the Assembly would raise the question of the mandate of the committee with very great prudence. Care should be taken not to touch the principles on which the organisation of the League of Nations was based. It was necessary to have confidence in the wisdom and good sense of the committee and in the competence of its members.

147. The delegate of the Irish Free State said that his Government hoped that the Committee of Experts would make full use of its right of obtaining information from Governments on particular questions and that Governments would reply fully to such questions. The sanctity of the principle that the League should not interfere in the internal affairs of its members should not be maintained to the point that it constituted an obstacle to the total abolition of slavery. He did not think that it was possible to put forward reasons of sovereignty for the purpose of refusing the assistance offered by the League in this field. The delegate of Portugal explained that his Government had sent no information to the last meeting of the committee because it had nothing new to say on the subject of slavery. With regard to the suggestion that the mandate of the committee might eventually have to be revised, he considered that the decision of the Assembly of 1932, which set up the committee, ought to be final. There could only be objections to an attempt to modify that decision.

148. The resolution of the committee, which was subsequently adopted by the Assembly, expressed the hope that the Governments

concerned would act on the suggestions and recommendations sent to them by the Council as a result of the report of the Committee of Experts on Slavery, and would communicate the necessary information in order to enable the committee to perform its task. The necessary financial provision was made for an extraordinary session of the committee in 1936.

IV.—*Intellectual Co-operation.*

149. The committee had before it a report submitted by M. Herriot, the *rapporteur*, giving a full account of the manifold activities of the organisation. The debate, which occupied three meetings, covered a very wide field. Reference was made, *inter alia*, to the promotion of the study of international relations by the organisation of conferences for the discussion of special subjects. In 1935 a conference had taken place in London upon the collective organisation of security. A further conference would be held upon the method of pacific settlement as applied to certain special cases. The work of promoting international collaboration in social sciences was being actively pursued by the Intellectual Co-operation Institute in collaboration with the International Labour Office.

150. The organisation also arranged "Conversations" between eminent intellectuals and published "Open Letters" by contemporary *literati*. In this connexion the Spanish delegate requested that particular attention should be devoted to the problem of the humanities, and the Hungarian delegate invited the organisation to convene an early meeting at Budapest to discuss this subject. The Chilean delegate expressed the wish that these particular activities of the intellectual co-operation Organisation should be extended to the countries of Latin America.

151. The Roumanian delegate proposed that the Organisation should extend its activities in the sphere of translations and that in addition to the work which it already carried out, it should publish a collection of translations, in one or more of the world-wide languages, of representative and classical works from the various European regional languages. This proposal met with considerable support in the committee.

152. A proposal, which was warmly supported by the Spanish delegate and delegates from Latin American countries, was the publication under the auspices of the organisation of a collection of ethnographical and historical works on the origins of American civilisation. The committee had before it a programme for the realisation of this proposal.

153. The committee was also asked to approve a proposal for closer collaboration between the organisation and the International Council of Scientific Unions. Other questions discussed were a

proposed conference, to be held in 1937, of the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, the work of the International Museums Office, and Educational Cinematography.

154. A draft resolution was submitted to the committee covering the activities of the organisation. In speaking on this resolution, the United Kingdom representative (Lord Cranborne) associated himself with the congratulations which had been paid to the Organisation, and particularly to M. Herriot. He made a general comment on the resolution itself. It referred to a number of proposals, one of which required expenditure by the League immediately, and others which might call for contributions in the future. These proposals were impeccable in themselves, and from the point of view of international understanding they might be of real value, but it was necessary to take into account the factor of finance. The League had a great deal to do, and not very much money to do it with. He wished to indicate that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would feel obliged, in making its decision on individual proposals, to bear in mind the general financial situation and the wide extent of objects to which its budget must extend. He did this without prejudice to the proposals themselves, and he welcomed the report on the work which had been done.

155. The resolution of the committee, which was subsequently adopted by the Assembly, approved the programme for the work of the organisation in 1935–36. The resolution emphasised the importance of the organisation of tours of educationists in one or more countries for the purpose of studying all matters relating to League of Nations teaching. The Roumanian proposal for the publication of translations of classical works from the literatures of European regional languages was approved, and referred to the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation for investigation and report to the next Assembly. The committee considered that the proposal for a collection of ethnographical and historical works on the origins of American civilisation should be further examined by competent persons appointed to draw up a final report and estimate to the next Assembly.

156. The resolution provided that the draft convention for the use of broadcasting in the cause of peace should be examined in 1936 by an *ad hoc* conference constituted during the Assembly by delegates furnished with the necessary powers. The resolution took note of the declaration which had been drawn up by the Intellectual Co-operation Committee concerning the revision of history text books, and the Council was requested to communicate this declaration to the members of the League and to invite them to sign it. The resolution approved the establishment of closer relations between the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation and the International Council of Scientific Unions, and decided to convoke a committee of scientific experts to advise on a programme of collaboration. The resolution

drew attention to the general conference of national committees on intellectual co-operation, which was to be held in Paris in 1937, and expressed the hope that Governments would facilitate the realisation of this project by offering substantial aid to their national committees. A proposal that the International Museums Office should study an international agreement for the regulation of art exhibitions was approved.

V.—*International Assistance to Refugees.*

157. On the initiative of the Norwegian Government this question was placed on the agenda of the Assembly and referred to the Sixth Committee.

158. The Norwegian delegate (Dr. Lange), in opening the discussion in the committee, referred to the general observations which he had already made in the plenary session of the Assembly. He put three practical questions before the committee. Should the present sphere of the League refugee organisation be enlarged? Should the existing refugee organisation be co-ordinated or unified? What should be the rôle of the League of Nations in refugee work? The most important consideration, in his opinion, was to obtain an extension of the present refugee work and its co-ordination or centralisation. A new organisation should not involve the League in any expenditure greater than that at present provided for in the budget. He proposed that a sub-committee should be set up to report back to the full committee.

159. The United Kingdom delegate (Lord Cranborne) pointed out that the existing League refugee organisation had not, in the first instance, been set up to deal with all refugees, but with certain specified categories. The problem had been regarded as a restricted and transitory one, and the Assembly had decided that the refugee organisation of the League should be wound up by 1938. Circumstances had changed since that decision was taken. Economic difficulties had hindered the permanent settlement of existing categories of refugees and new categories had made their appearance. The refugee problem was therefore not as ephemeral as had been hoped. The time had perhaps come to review the previous decision of the Assembly and to reconsider the organisation of the refugee services to deal for a further period with existing categories of refugees, and, if the Council so decided, with new categories which the unsettled state of the world might bring into existence. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom wished to express their gratitude to the Norwegian Government for bringing the question before the Assembly. The committee were, however, not only concerned to set up a scheme, but to set up the best scheme. There were three main elements to be considered, status, relief and settlement. The question of status was essentially an international problem, while the question of settlement and relief depended largely on the economic situation of countries of refuge and really formed a part of the domestic employ-

ment situation of those countries. While the refugee question as a whole might be recurrent, in so far as individual refugees were concerned, it was most important that it should be temporary. It was not desirable to create a class of permanent refugees. Nor could the League assume responsibility for relief or settlement. The usefulness of the League in dealing with the problem was therefore inevitably limited, but the value of the contribution which it could make should not be belittled. It was important that a suitable scheme should be devised. The existing machinery for dealing with refugee problems was extremely complicated and might well require reorganisation and simplification, especially if the League was eventually to assume responsibility for new categories of refugees. In all these questions the League would need expert advice. Lord Cranborne supported the appointment of a sub-committee.

160. The Latvian delegate pointed out that in his country refugees were accorded national treatment. If a small country like Latvia could deal with the refugee problem, other countries could surely do so as well. He saw no reason why recourse should be had to the machinery of the League of Nations. In any case he thought that the decision to liquidate the Nansen Office should be respected. The Roumanian delegate emphasised the importance of avoiding the creation of fresh categories of refugees and thereafter a class of perpetually stateless persons. The Italian delegate expressed the opinion that both the decision to liquidate the Nansen Office and the decision taken in regard to the High Commission for refugees coming from Germany should not be modified. He emphasised the delicate nature of the problem of political refugees. The Greek, Swedish, Polish, Belgian, Bulgarian and Czechoslovakian delegates generally supported the Norwegian proposal, but the Soviet delegate saw no reason for modifying the decision of the Assembly in regard to the liquidation of the Nansen Office, and said that his Government had no particular interest in the Norwegian proposal. The French delegate stated that his Government desired that the Norwegian proposal should be taken up by the League.

161. After further discussion, a sub-committee was appointed, consisting of the representatives of the United Kingdom, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Roumania, Switzerland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia. This sub-committee, under the chairmanship of the Swiss delegate (M. Motta), eventually reached an agreement which represented an honest compromise. It found that the Assembly had made arrangements for the winding up of the Nansen Office within a prescribed time limit, and according to definite budgetary rules; it considered that the League had already done useful work in the matter of assistance to refugees, but realised the great complexity of the refugee problem, which had political, legal, humanitarian, administrative and financial aspects. All these required further examination within the existing limits of the

decisions of the Assembly. It considered, further, that, subject to any future decisions, the examination should be limited, for political and financial reasons, to the categories of refugees already under the Nansen Office and the High Commissariat in London. It considered that no new additional expenditure should be incurred without explicit permission from the Assembly. It therefore proposed the appointment by the Council of a small committee of competent persons to report upon the refugee question. The committee should obtain all useful evidence, particularly that of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees. The Council, in the light of this report, would be able to take any measures which it might think desirable even before the ordinary session of the Assembly in 1936, to which, however, the question would have to be submitted.

162. The Norwegian delegate, in accepting this report, said that he had originally proposed that the League should extend its relief to all categories of refugees and stateless persons, and he expressed regret that this proposal had not been accepted. He pointed out, however, that in the sub-committee's report the right to take up the proposal at a later stage was reserved. The French representative also supported the report, but warned the League against the creation of "a series of super-structures of administrative and professional philanthropy which, on the pretext of concentration, co-ordination and supervision, swallowed up money which would be more usefully employed in succouring refugees." The refugee problem ought not to be perpetuated by the creation of a permanent bureaucracy; it should be regarded as a transient disorder and dealt with by unostentatious methods. The United Kingdom delegate said that he was satisfied that the resolution which was before the committee represented the greatest measure of agreement which it was possible to obtain in regard to the method of dealing with the difficult problem of the refugees. An enquiry had been instituted, and, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, it should be prosecuted with thoroughness and rapidity.

163. The report of the sub-committee was approved by the committee and subsequently adopted by the Assembly.

VI.—*Nansen Office for Refugees.*

164. The report of the Office gave a full survey of its work and achievements during the past year. An enquiry which has been instituted had revealed that there are at present in various parts of the world some 700,000 Russian refugees, 200,000 Armenians, 700,000 Assyrians and Assyro-Chaldeans and 60 Turkish refugees. The report also covered 3,300 refugees from the Saar who had been placed under the Nansen Office by a resolution of the Council in May 1935. The report pointed out, among other things, that, with the limited resources of the Office, it was becoming increasingly difficult to assist the ever-growing number of refugees who had been

thrown out of employment by administrative measures taken by Governments to protect their own nationals; that the expulsion of refugees by certain Governments had much aggravated the problem, and that the refugee problem could be solved only by the assimilation of refugees to the nationals of their countries of residence, but that in present political and economic circumstances there was little hope that naturalisation would be accepted as a general solution of the problem.

165. In the course of the discussion many tributes were paid to the work of the Nansen Office, but the Norwegian and French representatives both stated that the adoption of the report and resolutions on the work of the Office should not in any way affect the decisions reached concerning the general question of international assistance to refugees which was under discussion by the committee (see Section V above). The representative of Bolivia pointed out that the Nansen Office had taken up an invitation from the Paraguayan Government to send refugees to the Chaco. The Bolivian Government protested against any colonisation of the Chaco, which was disputed territory, through the agency of the League. The Chinese representative gave an account of the generous treatment of refugees by China, but stated that, although a number of refugees had obtained Chinese nationality, it would not be possible to assimilate all the refugees in China, and for these emigration offered the only certain future. The Bulgarian representative said that, in view of its financial situation, his Government was obliged to reduce its contribution to the Refugee Office at Sofia for 1936.

166. The resolutions of the committee, which were subsequently adopted by the Assembly, recommended Governments to ratify the 1933 convention regulating the international status of refugees; urged them not to expel refugees unless they had obtained entrance visas for another country; requested the Governments of the immigration countries to continue to inform the Nansen Office of the possibilities of settlement in their territories; recommended Governments to consider the advantage of capitalising their expenditure on refugees and of placing the funds thus raised at the disposal of the Office; and asked Governments to consider the possibility of issuing surcharged postage stamps in accordance with the suggestions of the inter-governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees at its session of March 1935.

VII.—*Assyrian Settlement Scheme.*

167. Following upon an offer by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to make an independent financial contribution to this scheme, subject to certain conditions, of which one was the readiness of the League of Nations to provide whatever balance might remain to be found after the contributions from all independent sources had been taken into account, the question of League financial

participation in the scheme was referred by the Council to the Assembly, and by the Assembly, in the first place, to its Sixth Committee. The importance of this question justifies, we think, the somewhat full account of the proceedings given here and in the section of this report dealing with the work of the Fourth Committee.

168. The discussion in the Sixth Committee was opened on the 17th September by a statement made on behalf of the chairman of the Committee of the Council which has been dealing for the past two years with Assyrian resettlement. This statement set out the elements of the problem and reviewed the efforts which the committee had made to solve it. Various schemes had been carefully examined and had proved unworkable. Finally, the committee had addressed itself to the French Government with an appeal to receive the Assyrians in the mandated territories of the Levant. The French Government had received the appeal with sympathy, but had stipulated that no financial responsibility should devolve upon them or upon the mandated territories. A provisional settlement of limited capacity already existed on the Upper Khabur River in North-East Syria, but for various reasons it was desirable that the permanent settlement should be in the Ghab area, where a detailed scheme had been worked out. The difficulty was finance. The scheme involved preliminary drainage and irrigation operations, estimated to cost 62 million French francs, of which the mandated territories of the Levant had, in spite of the reservation made by the French Government, now agreed to pay 22 million, leaving 40 million to be found by the Council Committee. In addition, the committee might have to find anything up to 30 million French francs for settlement proper. The United Kingdom Government had made certain suggestions tending to reduce this total liability of the Council Committee from 70 million to 45 million French francs, but the course of discussion had shown that this was only possible if means could be devised of raising, in the third year of the operation, a credit of 20 million French francs on the security, in the main, of Assyrian reimbursements. Towards this credit the mandated territories were willing to advance 6,500,000 French francs, leaving a gap to be filled of 13,500,000 French francs. To meet the sum of 45 million French francs immediately required, the committee had only, so far, the contribution promised by the Iraqi Government in May last of £10 a head up to £125,000 and the United Kingdom conditional offer of five-twelfths of the expense of the scheme which the Council Committee might be called upon to cover, up to a maximum of £250,000. The question of the League's financial participation in any scheme of settlement was one which the Assyrian Committee had always held to be outside its competence, and a vote of the Assembly was necessary for its approval. The statement pointed out that a decision was urgently needed. If the transfer of the Assyrians was to be begun in 1936 and completed during that year, no time could be lost in beginning the preliminary

work in the Ghab. Unless this work was begun within the next few weeks, there was a risk of a year's postponement of the whole operation, and this risk the Committee of the Council viewed with the gravest apprehension. The committee therefore hoped that the Assembly would consider the question with the utmost sympathy with a view to finding, if possible, the means whereby the League could participate in the measure necessary to ensure that the efforts which had been made to find a solution should not have been in vain.

169. The United Kingdom delegate (Lord Cranborne), in opening the debate, gave an historical account of the circumstances in which the Assyrian problem had arisen. He explained that the entry of the Assyrians into the war had not been the work of the British Government. It was with the forces of Imperial Russia that the Assyrian insurgents had joined up. Great Britain had had no independent dealings with the community until two or three years later, when the battered remnants had been saved from annihilation by British forces and brought to safety in 1918 within the borders of what is now Iraq. Having rescued the Assyrians in this manner, the British Government had continued to help them in Iraq from humanitarian motives over a considerable period and at an expense of more than £4,000,000 to the British Treasury. After the war, the Assyrians desired to return to their former homes, and the United Kingdom had done its utmost to help them. During the peace negotiations with Turkey, the United Kingdom Government had aimed at incorporating within Iraqi territory the Hakkiari district of Turkey, to which the majority of the Assyrians belonged, in order that they might be established there as an autonomous community under the sovereignty of Iraq. The question of the delimitation of the Iraqi-Turkish frontier had eventually, in virtue of the Treaty of Lausanne, come before the League Council in 1925, and the United Kingdom Government had made it clear that, unless the Hakkiari territory were included in Iraq, all hope of a separate homogeneous existence for the Assyrians would be destroyed. Unfortunately, the Council of the League had decided that the Hakkiari territory must remain Turkish, and this decision, which had finally separated some 20,000 Assyrians from their original homes, lay, in the view of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, at the root of the present difficulties. The problem, therefore, had an international character. The Assyrians could not return to their country of origin. They were largely an alien element in the country of their present residence. The régime which brought them into the war no longer existed, and the responsibility for the present situation could not be laid at the door of any single Government. The future of the Assyrians clearly called for collective action, and the problem was exactly the kind of problem which the world looked to the League to solve. A special responsibility had often been attributed in the matter to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, but the facts did not justify such a view. His Majesty's

Government were, however, most anxious to obtain a satisfactory solution of the problem, and the offer to pay five-twelfths of the cost of settlement, up to a maximum of £250,000, which His Majesty's Government had recently made, showed that they were prepared to bear what they believed to be perhaps even more than their fair share in reaching a solution. They also believed that for its part the League would not desire to avoid its share of the consequences of enforcing the Council's Mosul Boundary decision of 1925. In conclusion, Lord Cranborne pointed out that the settlement of the Assyrians was not a refugee problem; it was a political problem, which had an humanitarian aspect. The Council, by the creation of its Committee for Assyrian Settlement in 1933, had decided to solve an exceptional problem by exceptional measures. The Council Committee had made great efforts to give effect to that decision. Owing to the action of the United Kingdom, French and Iraqi Governments, a fair prospect for the Assyrians was now opening up, and Lord Cranborne felt convinced that the Assembly would not let the opportunity pass for want of any financial assistance which it was within the power of the League to give.

170. The Iraqi delegate said that, while he had not yet received final instructions from his Government, the generous offer of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had greatly improved the situation, and he hoped shortly to be in a position to make a statement. The Italian delegate expressed satisfaction that the problem of the Assyrians had at last entered on a phase of positive solution. Provided that the financial consequences of the proposed scheme would not make too large a call on the League budget, the Italian delegation would feel very great satisfaction at the scheme.

171. The Danish delegate was then appointed *rapporteur*, and he presented a report and resolution at the next meeting of the committee on the 19th September. The report pointed out that the Assyrian question was not a refugee problem, but eminently a political problem, which the Council, as early as 1933, decided to consider as exceptional.. Its immediate and radical solution would greatly contribute to the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the Near East. Its abandonment would have consequences which would affect not only the Assyrians and Iraq, but also other States with reactions which would be bound to damage the highest interests of the League of Nations. The resolution, after reciting the various aspects of the problem, declared that the proposal of the United Kingdom concerning the financial participation of the League was worthy of the most sympathetic consideration of the Assembly, and that the Sixth Committee consequently referred to the Fourth Committee the question of the provision of the necessary funds.

172. After the Netherlands delegate had declared that he would abstain from voting, the report and resolution were adopted by the committee.

173. In the meantime the Council Committee had been giving further detailed consideration to the plan of settlement, and had drawn up a note on the financial aspect of it, which was transmitted by the Sixth Committee to the Fourth Committee. This note envisaged certain economies and adjustments which would bring down the cost of settlement proper to some 24 million French francs instead of 30 million as originally contemplated.

174. The matter was then discussed in the Fourth Committee (see paragraphs 76 to 84 above), with the result that a League contribution to the scheme was decided upon. The report and resolution of the Sixth Committee and the report of the Fourth Committee authorising the necessary appropriations in the League budget for 1936 arising out of it were subsequently approved by the Assembly.

Adjournment of Session.

175. On the 28th September the Assembly adopted a proposal by its General Committee that its session should not be closed but should be adjourned "without prejudice to the powers of the Council."

176. Before adjourning the session the President read a letter from the United States Consul in Geneva expressing the interest of the United States Government in the economic programme put forward by the Second Committee (see paragraph 54 above) and welcoming the recommendation for the adoption of a more liberal trading policy by means of bilateral trading agreements based on the most-favoured-nation principle.

Dispute between Italy and Abyssinia.

177. The Assembly met again on the 9th, 10th and 11th October in connexion with the Italo-Abyssinian dispute and the President explained the circumstances in which the Assembly had been reconvened. He recalled the conditions in which the Assembly had adjourned, and gave his reasons for summoning the present meeting.

178. After the Committee on Credentials had presented its report, the President read a communication of the 8th October from the President of the Council forwarding the report of the Committee of the Council constituted on the 5th October, 1925 (the Committee of Six), and the Minutes of the meeting of the Council on the 7th October.

179. The President said that the Assembly were sitting in ordinary session and that it was necessary to apply strictly the rules of procedure. The communication from the President of the Council was a new question, and a two-thirds majority of the Assembly was required before it could (i) be included in the agenda of the session; and (ii) be taken into immediate consideration.

180. The approval of the Assembly having been obtained, the President explained the procedure contemplated for the session. He said that the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia was still under the consideration of the Council, and that the Assembly was not taking the place of the Council in the matter; that the Assembly was not reopening the procedure under article 15 of the Covenant, but that the members of the Assembly were now invited to state their position with regard to the documents communicated to them by the President of the Council. The assent of each Government to the opinion expressed by fourteen members of the Council would be given individually. Those members who desired to express a contrary view or to record abstentions or reservations would have an opportunity to do so. The silence of delegations would be taken to imply the concurrence of their Governments in the opinion of the fourteen members of the Council. Lastly the President of the Council had expressed the desire of the members of the Council that the Assembly should be associated with them in considering the measures to be taken. The Assembly would therefore be called upon to deal with this question and to take such decisions as might be required, such as the setting up of a co-ordinating body and the definition of its terms of reference.

181. The President then called upon those delegations who wished to speak against, or to obstain from voting on the conclusions of the Committee of Fourteen Members of the Council.

182. The Austrian delegate (Baron Pflügl) first reaffirmed Austria's attachment to the principles of the League of Nations. Italy was a good neighbour and a trusted friend for whom Austria felt the deepest sympathy. Italy, at a fateful moment in Austria's history, had helped to safeguard the integrity of another member of the League. Friendship between Italy and Austria had been increased by a debt of gratitude—not provided for by the Covenant—which implied obligations. The principal task of the League was to maintain peace. Austria was confident that the League would exhaust every other method before imposing sanctions. Sanctions would entail serious dangers for the economic life of Europe, particularly for some smaller States. He was thinking also of Austria's creditors. In these circumstances the Austrian Government did not for the present see how it could associate itself with certain of the conclusions already reached by other States members of the League.

183. The Hungarian delegate (M. Velics), referring to the principle of sanctions, said that the League existed for the maintenance of peace. This involved efforts to eliminate all the causes which might lead to war. The world was not static; provision for changes must be made, and he wondered whether in the present case all measures in this direction had been exhausted. Sanctions were reserved as a last resort against manifest bad faith. The Hungarian

Government was in a special position in regard to economic sanctions. The exclusion of Italy from Hungary's restricted and limited trade outlets would upset Hungarian economic and financial equilibrium. The Hungarian Government, which had not had an opportunity of examining with the necessary care the facts and documents in the case, could not associate itself with the conclusions of the fourteen members of the Council.

184. On the following day the Italian delegate (Baron Aloisi) first made all reservations in regard to the procedure which the Assembly had adopted. He then explained the Italian standpoint in regard to the political and historical aspects of the dispute. He declared that the Italian memorandum of the 4th September had not been properly taken into account and that the Italian delegation had been refused the possibility of explaining its attitude in due time. He recalled the part that Italy had played at Geneva, and by contrast said that Abyssinia had failed to observe both her undertakings to Italy and her obligations towards the League. Abyssinia had not fulfilled the conditions laid down in article 1 of the Covenant, and should have been expelled under article 16, paragraph 4. The aggressive attitude of Ethiopia had obliged Italy to adopt adequate measures of a military character. Baron Aloisi then stated that Italy's cause was in harmony with the Covenant and with the international obligations of his country. He referred in particular to article 1, article 23 and article 16, paragraph 4, of the Covenant. As regards the Kellogg Pact, he pointed out that this instrument placed no restriction upon the right of legitimate defence, and he referred to the reservation which had been made by the United States Senate and by His Majesty's Government on ratification.

185. Finally, he indicated the legal and political conditions which confirmed and sanctioned Italy's right. The action of the League in the present case and in previous cases was inconsistent, and differential treatment was being applied. War was not suppressed; it was replaced; it was necessary to remove the causes of war. Italy in the present circumstances was interpreting the real spirit of the League and was fighting not only her own battle but also that of the League. To become a living and effective force the League must set aside any policy involving differential treatment; it must harmonise that part of the Covenant which related to evolution to that part which related to conservation.

186. The President drew attention to the reservation in regard to procedure made by Baron Aloisi, and the Assembly confirmed the decision which it had previously taken.

187. The President then said that the Assembly had taken note of the attitude of Hungary and Austria and had heard the opinion of the Italian delegate. One delegation had asked to speak later, but with this exception, he interpreted the silence of all the

delegations as signifying the concurrence of their Governments in the opinion already expressed by fourteen members of the Council.

188. The French delegate (M. Laval) stated that France would meet her obligations; the Covenant was an international law which could be neither infringed nor weakened. Each country must take its responsibility, and France would observe the Covenant. It was also her duty simultaneously to seek a solution by conciliation. The French Government would devote itself to the work of peace, in which, he felt sure, they would have the co-operation of the Assembly.

189. The United Kingdom delegate (Mr. Eden) expressed the belief that it was universally understood that the foreign policy of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom remained firmly based on its membership of the League. The maintenance of peace was the first objective of their policy. The League had two tasks: first, to avert war, and, secondly, if that were impossible, to stop war. It was now concerned with the second of these tasks and by its effectiveness in dealing with the situation the League would be judged. The United Kingdom would take full part in such action as was decided upon. They would do so with regret, but any action should be prompt, as war was actually in progress. At all times the United Kingdom would be ready to co-operate whole-heartedly in the task of securing an early and peaceful settlement of the dispute.

190. The Swiss delegate (M. Motta) then made a declaration. Switzerland had associated herself with the findings of the States members of the Council. Sanctions were now applicable, but Switzerland took note of the fact that no reference had been made to sanctions involving the use of force. Economic and financial sanctions were not designed to be hostile acts; they aimed at the exercise of moral and material pressure. After referring to the status of the Swiss Confederation, M. Motta said that its general obligation to take part in sanctions was not absolute, and should be interpreted in the light of the resolutions of the Assembly of 1921. The limits of its obligation were determined by its neutrality, which constituted at once a fundamental principle and a vital interest. He welcomed M. Laval's declaration as to further attempts at conciliation.

191. The Soviet delegate (M. Potemkine) quoted statements previously made by M. Litvinov in regard to the dispute. The Soviet Government reaffirmed its determination to honour, in common with all the other members of the League, the undertaking which the Covenant imposed upon all, without exception. Unity of action was essential for the settlement of a conflict which had its origin in a desire for colonial expansion and which infringed the territorial integrity and national independence of a State member of the League. This unity of action would serve as a check on future attempts at aggressive action.

192. The Yugoslav delegate (M. Pouritch), on behalf of the Little *Entente*, and the Greek delegate (M. Maximos), on behalf of the Balkan *Entente*, stated that the Governments of the *Ententes* would execute to the full their obligations under the Covenant.

193. The Abyssinian delegate (M. Técle Hawariate) expressed the resentment of his Government at the accusations of the Italian Government, which would in due course be refuted. His Government had waited patiently while the League watched over the execution of treaties and of the Covenant, and now respectfully asked each member of the League to discharge its duty according to its obligations. Any delay would render the action to be taken less effective. Abyssinia had purchased no weapons of defence with her slender resources within the last year : and Italy had now employed the most advanced weapons which civilisation had devised, but which were completely unknown to the majority of Abyssinians. His Government were at the disposal of the League with regard to the cessation of hostilities, and they were prepared to conclude an honourable peace; but they would never yield to force and would not accept any solution of the dispute which paid a premium to the aggressor.

194. The Mexican delegate (M. Gomez) said that his Government would fulfil their obligations under the Covenant without reserve.

195. The Haytian, Chilean, Ecuadorean, Peruvian, Venezuelan, Bolivian and Uruguayan delegates also addressed the Assembly.

196. The President then referred to a draft proposal which had been circulated concerning the constitution of a committee of co-ordination. This was not a resolution of the Assembly, it was an invitation addressed by the Assembly to the States members of the League.

197. The Italian delegate (Baron Aloisi) stated, firstly, that no decision had been taken by any competent organ of the League to the effect that a case covered by article 16 had arisen; and, secondly, that the proposed committee could not be regarded as in any sense an organ of the League. The President replied that no organ of the League had power to decide, in such a way as to bind all the members, that one of them had violated the Covenant. That obligation derived directly from the Covenant, and must be observed by members of the League in virtue of the respect due to treaties. He agreed that the proposal under discussion was not a formal resolution of the Assembly : it was an invitation addressed by the Assembly to the States members.

198. The Hungarian and Austrian delegates refrained from taking up a definite position in regard to the proposal.

199. The draft proposal was then adopted by the Assembly. It recommended that the members of the League, other than the parties, should set up a committee to consider and facilitate the co-ordination

of the measures which members might severally contemplate in virtue of article 16 of the Covenant, and, if necessary, to draw the attention of the Council of the Assembly to the situations requiring to be examined by them.

200. On the following day the Albanian delegate (M. Frasheri) stated that his Government remained faithful to the Covenant, but, in view of its political relations as determined by a treaty of alliance with Italy and of the importance of maintaining the economic relations between the two countries, it could not endorse the decision reached by the Assembly in regard to the application of sanctions against Italy.

201. The President announced that several delegates had asked for an explanation of the situation in the light of the Italian delegate's speech of the preceding day, in which he maintained that the Italian memorandum of the 4th September had not been examined by the League. He would give a simple recital of the facts. All members of the League had received the relevant documents. In agreement with the President of the Council, the chairmen of the Council committees concerned and also with the Secretary-General, M. Benes drew the Assembly's attention to the following points: The memorandum by the Italian Government of the 4th September had been studied by the members of the Council and, in particular, by a Committee of Five Members of the Council constituted to seek a pacific settlement of the dispute, and it had been communicated to all members of the League. A sub-committee of the Committee of Five had been constituted to examine more particularly the Italian memorandum and to extract from it the points defining the situation which it was desired to remedy. The Committee of Five had made suggestions to the Ethiopian and Italian Governments, and the preparation of these suggestions had been facilitated by the fact that the Abyssinian Government had applied for the help of the League with a view to certain reforms desired by the Imperial Government itself. As regards the nature of the reforms proposed, the Committee of Five had endeavoured to take into account, in the largest possible measure, the grievances set out in the Italian memorandum. After the failure of the conciliatory efforts of the Committee of Five, the Italian memorandum was examined by the members of the Committee of Thirteen, appointed to draft the report under article 15, paragraph 4, of the Covenant. Certain paragraphs of the report referred to the Italian memorandum. In reciting these facts M. Benes was not concerned with disputing any conclusion which each party to the dispute might draw from them. He was merely recounting certain facts relating to procedure and to the acts of the organs of the League as such.

202. The President stated that the Sixteenth Session of the Assembly would be adjourned, and not closed.

203. The President then summarised the results of the Assembly's proceedings. The Assembly had considered the communication from the President of the Council, and of fifty-four members present at the Assembly, fifty had either tacitly or expressly concurred in the opinion of fourteen members of the Council in regard to the breach of the Covenant by Italy. Three States had expressed a contrary opinion, a fourth had declared itself against the application of sanctions. The Assembly had further recommended the constitution of a Co-ordinating Committee, which had already met and started its work. In conclusion, M. Benes urged on the two parties the need for a rapid restoration of peace. The Council would remain at the disposal of the parties in order to aid them in establishing the conditions in which hostilities might be brought to an end..

204. The Assembly then adjourned.

We are, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

LESLIE BURGIN.

CRANBORNE.

DE LA WARR.

FLORENCE HORSBRUGH.

WILLIAM MALKIN.

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